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No.16 February 1987
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FABULOUS FEATURES

DOMARKED FOR LIFE!
While out getting the Christmas spirit Ricky bumps into Mark Strachan from Domark.

THE LEGENDARY CHALLENGE
The Italian Stallion takes on a Geordie minion in a battle to save Dan Dare.

THE RAINBIRD GALLERY
Our resident art critic takes a personal view of this month's screen offerings.

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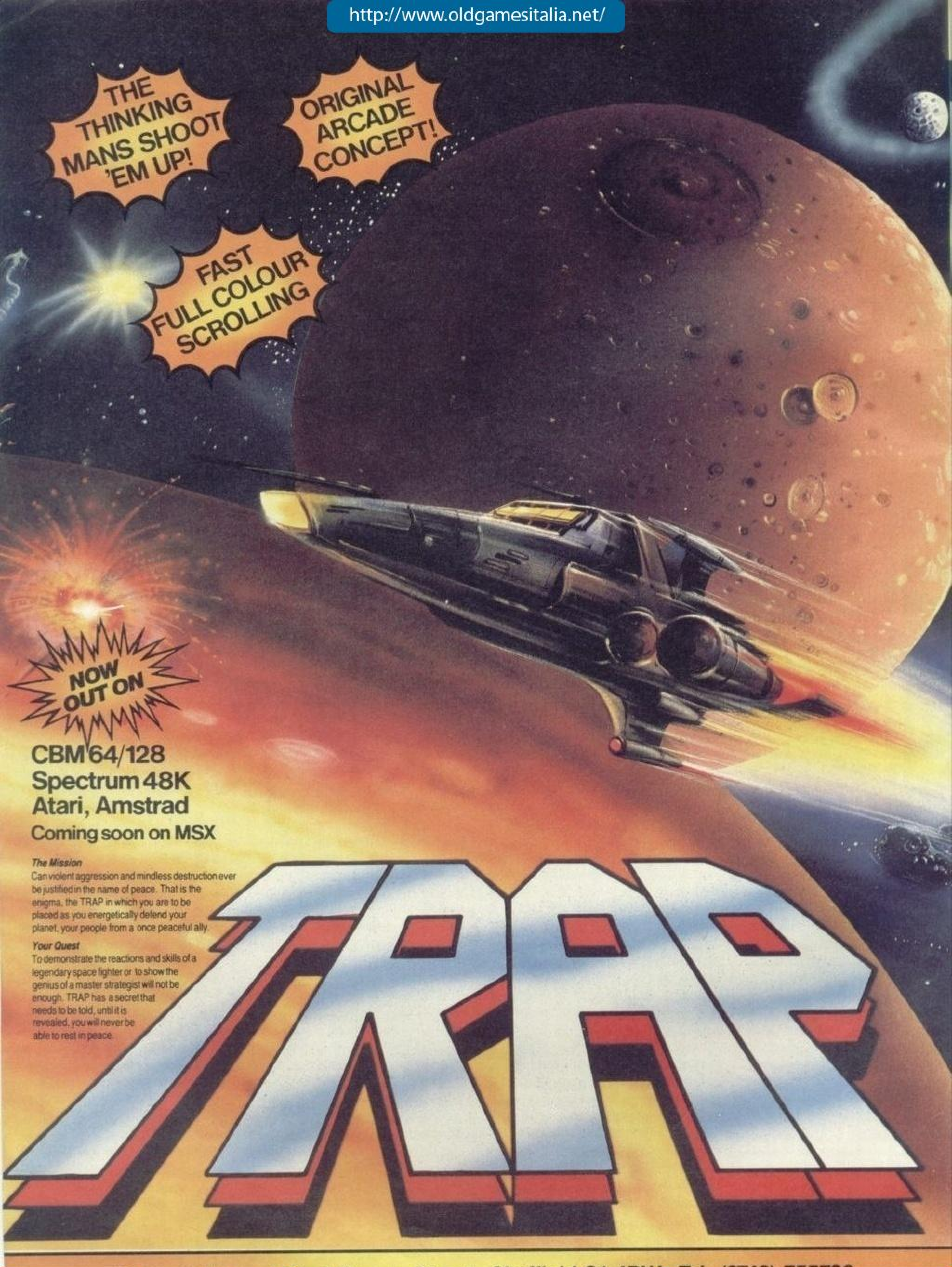
Time to sober up and get down to your local newsagent's shop to pick up the March issue of AMTIX! showing from the 5th February.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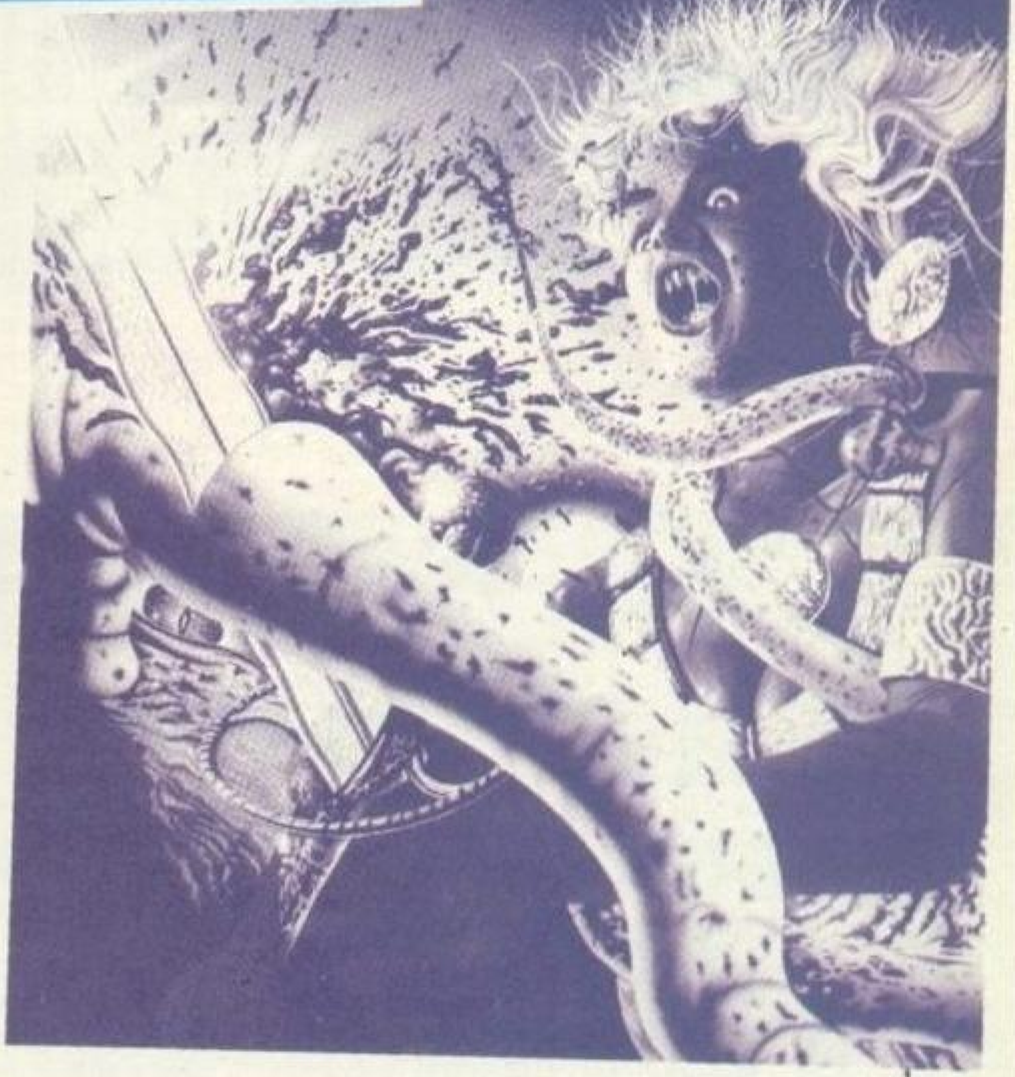

ANOTHER EXCITING YEAR AT THE TOWERS

Well that's it, another Christmas and New Year over and done with. It's time to get down to the business once again. As expected there was one hell of a last minute rush of games into the Towers in the run up to Christmas. Even so at one stage it appeared there would only be two Accolades in this issue – *Gauntlet* and *Star Glider*. However, at the eleventh hour another three cracking games arrived in the shape of *Antiriad*, *Into the Eagles Nest*, and *Mercenary*. As you read this we shall be packing our bags and travelling south to the big smoke to man a stand at the Amstrad Show, once again being held at the Novotel in Hammersmith from the 9th to 11th January inclusive. We'll see you there!

SOME FATHERLY ADVICE

I would like to suggest none of our readers send any form of payment to a company called *Micro Mail* which is rumoured to be experiencing financial difficulties. They also trade under the name of Celcom. Don't say you have not been warned!

THE OOPS DEPT

Oh well, with the size with the Christmas special there was bound to be the occasional slip up. Number one was the price of Bobby Bearing which actually retails at the rather good price of £8.95 not £9.95 as stated. Number two was the Disk Box offer in which the headline said that it could be bought from us at £5.95. In fact that is the retail price. Really your disks can be kept in order from us at £5.00. End of public service announcement. Thank you.

A PLEA TO AMSTRAD

Dear Alan Sugar,
At the beginning of November we rang one of your minions to order some lovely Printer ribbons for our DMP 2000 which is feeling very pale at the moment. We would be happy if you could get your act together, kick a minion into action and produce them pronto.

TRIVIA GALORE

AMTIX! reader, Julian Hearn, recently travelled to London to compete in the national final of Domark's *Trivial Pursuit* competition. He failed to carry off the £10,000 solid gold *Trivial Pursuit* set but he had an enjoyable day as indeed did everyone else who intended, including myself. A big thanks to **Domark** and congratulations to them for selling over 170,000 units of the computer game.

THESE AM GRUMLINS! YAS!

BWAH! We is here, and we am goin' ta rule the wurld won day! For now on we shall be taking over this mugazune and gettin' the team into shape. We is cute, an' we is hugable but most of all we am NASTY! (Grrrr!) So, bewore coz we am all powerful an' if anyone do dare cum up against us then there will be um lots of big, fat, hairy trubble. (Grrrr).

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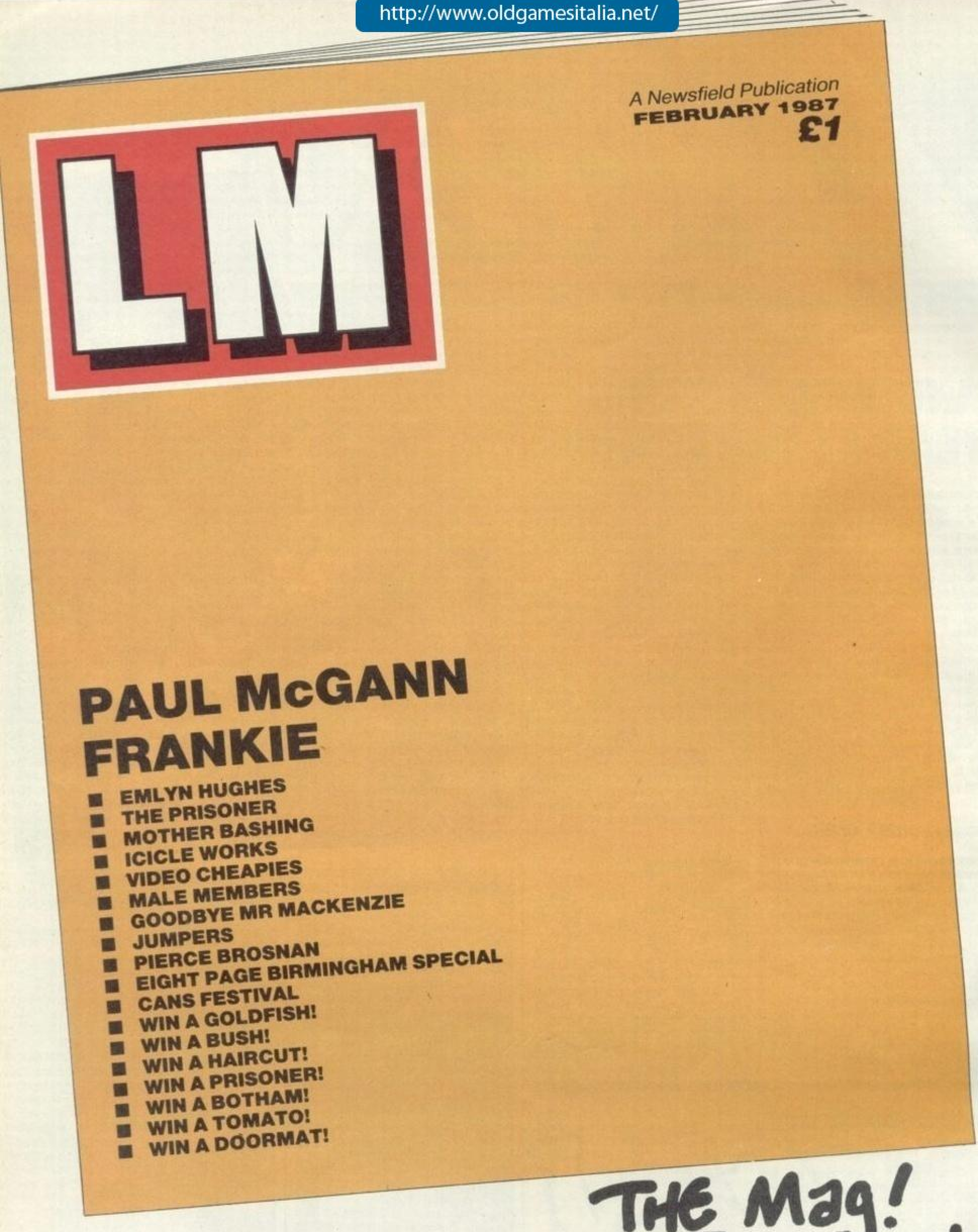

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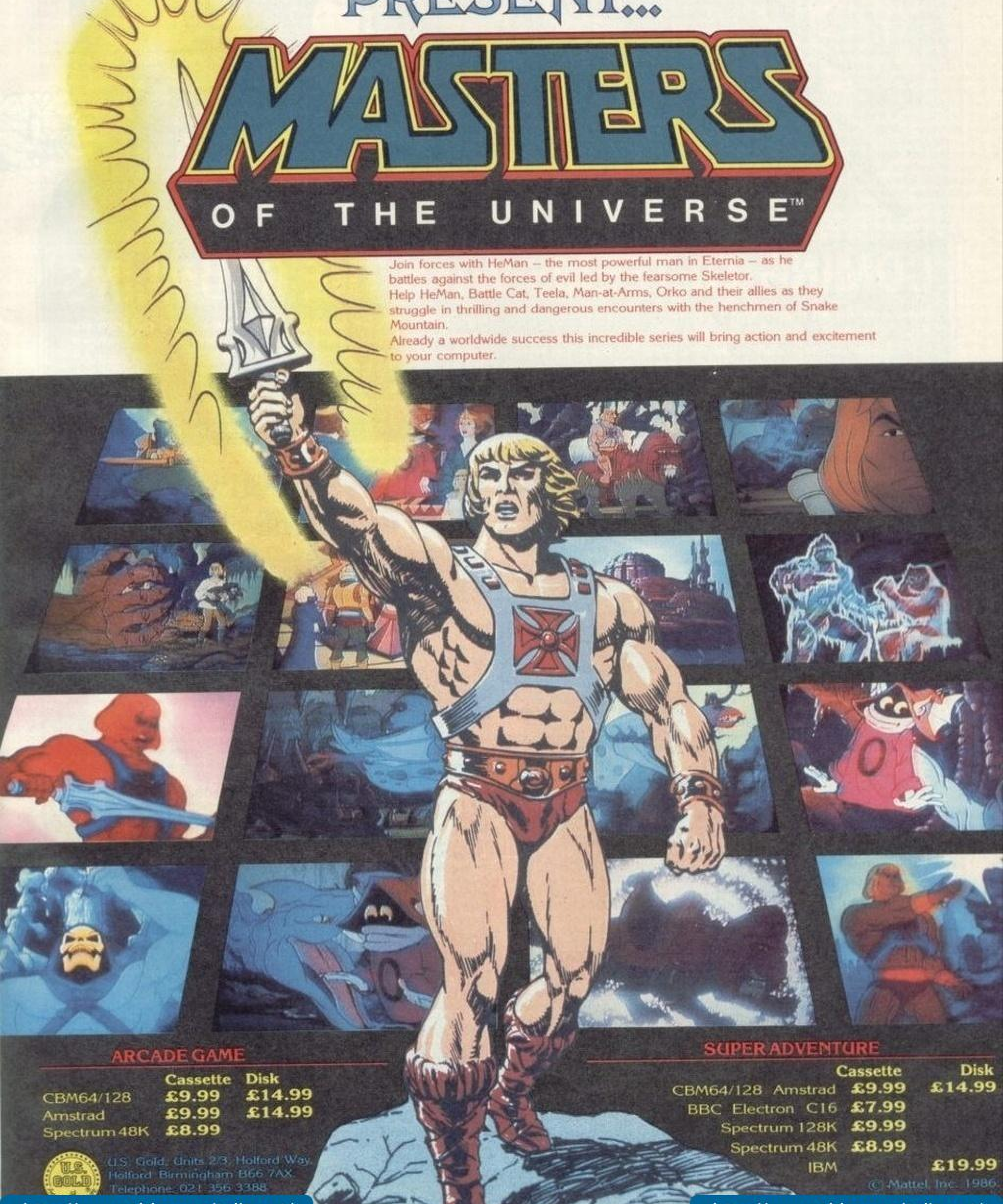

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COMING TO TERMS WITH THE GRUMLINS

How are we all then? Not to hung over from our New Year's parties? Good. I tell you, I thought those little beasts who have suddenly decided to take up residence in our pages were the product of a very heavy party. But no, it seems as if they're here to stay. I must say some of the Grumlins are cute, then again, some are a bit violent, and some are downright disgusting but that's another story. Before we head off into the ramblings I just want to say a word about Lashout, which never did appear. There is a long and complicated story to this the only thing that I can say is that one very interesting story has cropped up and once it's got a happy ending we'll tell you all about it. Okay then, let's go..

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Dear Saffron

Remember in the good old days when games cost about a fiver and Ocean was a small company striving for that elusive best seller. Remember when you bought a game it was usually original, nowadays games cost around nine quid and are very similar eg. *Knight Lore*, *Alien 8*, *Fairlight* and a thousand others. I'm not knocking these games as some are really good, but aren't people getting bored of the same style of game appearing on their screens.

Software companies are now turning to the arcades for ideas for games like Melbourne House's *Way of the Exploding Fist* which was based on the arcade game *Karate champ*. As soon as that game became successful software companies began releasing loads of beat em ups. The companies have done the same with *Commando*, and *Marble Madness* clones.

Companies have now realised that instead of copying the ideas why not licence the original arcade game. Most of these games sell solely on the arcade name instead of the quality of the game.

Now I come to my last point why don't companies go back to producing original games which people are glad to see instead of the endless clones we are now used to seeing.

Neil McCartney, Castleford, West Yorkshire

Some very strong views there Neil. Well argued and I think I'm tempted to agree you with the fact that there's not enough originality in games these days – too many clones. Some people really should buck their ideas up. Anyway Crumbly and I think you deserve the £20 software for letter of the month!

ST

I'M A COMP ADDICT!

Dear Saffy

Can you tell me something please, to put my mind at rest? Say I want to enter ALL your comps (yes all) can I instead of posting all entries separately, stick them together (in separate envelopes) into 1 big envelope? If so, who do I address it to?

Christina Smith, Dyfed, Wales.

Yes, of course, you can pop all your entries into one envelope as long as you remember to address them to Julie Yaxley, the competition secretary. Okay? Great stuff!

ST

IF YOU THINK YOU'VE GOT PROBLEMS

Dear Saffron

To you and all at AMTIX! Towers have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year (we did! - Crumbly).

Thank you all for brightening up 1986 with the only Amstrad magazine worth its salt. I've tried all the others, but yours is the only one I subscribe to.

After reading so many of the letters that are either complaining about or enquiring after prizes from your magnificent competitions. I thought I had better relate my own experience and then perhaps they wouldn't feel so sorry for themselves.

Last Christmas I entered and won a competition for a modem, serial interface, software and year's subscription to Prestel/Micronet. A totally fabulous prize by anybody's reckoning.

The result for the competition came three issues after it appeared in the mag, this was March. Twelve weeks later the serial Interface and Software arrived through the post. Another week past and then Prestel contacted me to take out the year's subscription. I waited for three more weeks before applying for my Prestel/Micronet membership as I still didn't have the modem. Prestel replied ten days later and this was at the end of July. The modem finally arrived at the end of August. Unfortunately for me I was out of country at the time, as I'm in the Royal Navy. I was away until Mid October, when I had a weekend at home.

So there I was finally in front of my humble 464 and single disk drive, ready to connect up my fabulous prize. Meticulously I connected the interface to the computer and the D D to the interface, then the modem to the interface and telephone. Everything exactly as in the instructions, I placed the disk based software is the drive and typed the appropriate command. The screen did a sort of colourful burp and then reset. Three hours later, after disconnecting and reconnecting I finally worked out that the RS 232 interface was well and truly duff. This has had to be returned to Pace, the manufacturer.

I have been away since then and am not due to be back home until the end of November. So after winning the competition eleven months ago I still haven't yet been able to use it. But then never mind, maybe it will be ready by this Christmas.

I really do enjoy your magazine and all its features, most especially that you all have a sense of humour.

By the way, I prefer the new logo for the mag. It took about a week, before I could decipher the old one.

Finally, I just love your name. I'd never heard of Saffron before, terrific.

Dave Sheppard, Fareham, Hampshire, PO14 3AD.

You poor little sailor you. Hopefully it's worked this time, keep in touch and let me know how it's going this Christmas.

ST

MOAN, WINGE, COMPLAIN

Dear Saffron

I read your mag every month and after 14 months I have had to write in about a certain software houses called US Gold and Ocean. You may have played two games by them called *Matchday* and *Winter Games*. I have because I own them. When I bought *Winter Games*, I was amazed by the similarities in options between the two games until I discovered both games had been written by Sentinent software. You may wonder what is wrong with this. Well unbelievably, the sound of the two games (ie bobsleigh tune and ball bouncing in *Matchday* is almost identical). Is this what we expect from two of the biggest software houses or is it that these houses care more about producing good games for the commy 64 and produce only old-rubbish for the Amstrad because it isn't going to make as much money . Take *Super-bowl* for example. Ocean didn't convert it they say due to unsurpassable problems. I bet you that wouldn't have happened on any other computer. That's about all I have to say except what happened to the follow up to *Marsport* and how could you publish some reviews in issues 1 - 12 in black and white claiming colour was expensive and then print 4 pages in colour of Terminal Man?

Navid Afzal, London, SW16 3DR.

Working back up the letter . . . Colour is expensive. Very. However, it was a slightly different case with the Hardware Softy as the Scan sheet had already been produced for use in both CRASH and ZZAP! so any extra cost wasn't entailed. The follow up to *Marsport*, *Fortnax* I think it was called, hasn't been planned for release at the moment as Gargoyle are currently working on their new FTL label – *Shockway Rider* is the next release. Rumours have it that *Superbowl* was actually written but never actually put out onto the market, not sure why, but then I'm not David Ward am I?

The selection system was obviously good in both *Match Day* and *Winter Games* so why not use it again. Logical really. Pity about the sound.

ST

PETALS

Dear Saffron

If my letter has been put in the Chrissie special about *HERMES* then I would like to tell you about my dealings with software companies when I wrote off asking for support. A super quick response came from Gremlin asking for me to send them a copy of *HERMES* although very sadly the launch date has been postponed due to a scholarship that I am taking. Then a few days wait and I heard from US Gold, Ocean and Hewson. US Gold enclosed lots of posters which were nice, Ocean wrote saying it cost 50p for posters! And wonderful, wonderful Hewson's Julia Coombs sent me lots of posters, a very nice letter and tons of release dates for future games and wished me every success.

Then next day I heard from excellent Mirrorsoft's Pat Bitton who sent me a Mirrorsoft catalogue and a very informative letter with lots of good advice and saying that she had added my name to their press list for information. Also very good. I am waiting to hear from Ariolasoft, The Edge, Martech and Gargoyle. To sum it up, the smaller companies seem to be most helpful apart from Mirrorsoft and the women are brilliant just like you (Grovel, Grovel). Also Gremlin were good with their speedy response and US Gold for their posters. However, thumbs down to Ocean and hurry up all you other companies.

Thomas Wilson, Hermes Magazine, West Acre, Harrow on the Hill, Middlesex, HA1 3LS

PS What's the difference between The Edge's *Shao-Lin's Road* and Imagine's *Yie Ar Kung Fu II* as they sound the same thing to me?

Yes, this has always been the case. Some companies really want to help people like you to be enterprising; others just couldn't give a monkey nut to help out. Ricky tells me that his 'petal's (Eg his collection of software house girlies) can be very helpful at times especially Julia-from-Hewsons who never seems to be out of this office some days!

ST

PACK UP YOUR TROUBLES . . .

Dear Saffron

Thank you for such a great magazine, which contrary to popular belief is reliable, definitely colourful and always bursting with competitions. My main concern in writing to you, is to comment on the well worn topic of software prices. I myself have been following computers with interest for a long time and have experienced a steady rise in prices over the past few years. This is not to say that quality has diminished, in fact quite the opposite, most 'full price' games are now above a set standard, with only a few exceptions.

Upon hearing how much a software buyer pays for packaging it has brought me to think , do we really need such elaborate boxes? Most plastic cassette boxes are quite sufficient and fancy artwork on the cover is only an extra. Well, that's my gripe finished. How about giving OTS an extension for people to comment on their views of different games, it's not that you reviews aren't sufficient, but before forking out a tenner it would be nice to have an extra bit of information.

Your previews are truly brilliant, full of colour and interest. This is the second place I turn to after receiving your magazine, with the first being your list of accoladed games. Don't let these blind fools put you off Oliver dear, I happened to like the new logo and I think it should stay. Also, why can't US Gold take an example from Piranha, with their ace game *Trap door*, at a lower price with good quality. I say US Gold because I am going to accuse them for making people pay for their name on the box. Having a set of US Gold games is similar to buying a designer brolly! How about it boys just a pound off, huh, pretty please! Also why can't these poor impoverished people who claim to only be able to afford games get a paper round like me?

Thank for a good read, not monthly, but daily!

Daragh Carter (yup, I'm a Celt!) Tetbury, Glos, GL8 8HB.

Like I've said many a time, ten quid for sub-standard game just isn't on. Take a look at the appalling *Breakthru* this issue – it's stupid! However, the argument goes something like this: Retailers get around half the price the rest has to pay for the packaging, artwork, advertising, programmers fees etc. Sometimes it's worth it but a lot of the time it isn't. It makes me so angry . . .

Any alternative comments for games are most welcome, if we get enough then we'll make it into a special page – as always it's simply up to you.

I know someone sitting not too far away from me that also think Piranha are brilliant especially that Mandy girl from there. I think you know who I'm talking about!

Good on you for getting a paper round! I used to do one and it was great fun getting up at seven o'clock in the morning with the rain pouring down, slipping on the ice, coming back cold and tired. Brilliant!

ST

THE PROBLEM WITH WIGGLY THINGS

Dear Saffron

Firstly what a brill mag you lads have got there. I have bought 2 joysticks costing me together about £22 (which for me getting £1 a week took me ages to get). The first was an Amsoft JY2, it broke after 2 months (surely they have a longer life expectancy). The next was a quickshot II by Spectravideo, this also broke with one fire button not working and the other only 50% of the time. I must admit though that after many a heated argument with Boots I got my £9 back.

Not wanting to experience another disappointment could you advice me on a joystick that one of yopr reviewers use, or any others that you would recommend. Please could you also give the price.

Thanks again for the Brill mag, keep up the excellent work.

Charles Pasfield, West Hoathly, Sussex.

As everybody should know by know I am the world's leading expert on wiggly things and for my money, not that I get much being overworked and underpaid as I am, I would pick the Euromax Professional – it's great. Black with yellow bits all over it. For the full review of it look in the freebie copy of LM last month.

ST

ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE

Dear Saffron
I am writing to air my grievances and moan a bit. Firstly; a comment on the drivel written by Richard Nicholson from Norfolk (ish 13). What a total waste of paper, ink, space and intelligence.

Secondly, why does everyone want pokes for the good games, a game is meant to be a challenge to the user not just something you complete and throw to the back of the cupboard.

Thirdly I think software houses should be banned from advertising a game until it is released as this would stop people sending money and waiting for one delayed release date after another.

Last but not least don't change the mag as it is good enough already.

Yours truly, A Richardson, Penywell, Sunderland, Tyne and Wear

1. Be fair me old fruit cake, All boring letters and no play makes Saffy jolly batey.

2. Just remember we're not all mega gameplayers, like you may claim to be.

3. That point is a bit silly. The whole thing about advertising in advance is to inform the public that this will soon be on the shelves. However, this sometimes gets out of hand. Doesn't it?
ST

TELL US STRAIGHT

Dear Saffron
Firstly I would like to congratulate you and AMTIX! Towers for your December issue it was 'out of this world'. It was so good that my mother insisted on reading it before I did!

Anyway enough of this grovelling and down to the point. A number of readers have wrote in and asked you if the CPC464 is going to be phased out. But you have not given them a definite answer. So please, please I ask you could you give us a definite answer. Go on, have a brolly basing at AMSTRAD and insist that they tell you.

Keep up the good work and au revoir for now.

Daniel Manton, Water Orton, Birmingham.

PS Also could you please state when Konami's coin-op hits' (December) and 'Amtix Accolades' (December) will appear on the shelves.

No it's not being phased out! Both games are on sale now but you can get the AMTIX! Accolades free when you subscribe so if you are not on our subscription list go for it!
ST

I GOTTA FANZINE TOO!

Dear Saffy
My pal's and I have come up with a great and I mean GRREEAAT!! idea. When you're reading this we'll be working hard on it. I know what your thinking, what is it? Well it's another computer mag (yawn yawn). But this is not an ordinary mag, this is special (Ear's prick up) because it's only for (wait for it!) Commodore, Amstrad and Spectrum (gasp! horror). It has many features like the following, software top twenty, Serious software top twenty, Maps, Hundreds of Pokes, Reviews, Cartoons, type-in's, Readers reviews, pen pals, competitions and many more features's. The first issue should be available soon. We will send you a copy when it has been printed. So if a reader would like a copy please write to the following address and send a stamped addressed envelope with 70 pence, or send your name and address with a pound, and we'll send it first class (it should arrive within ten days). By the way your mag's great!!

Peter Antrobus, Summit Estate, Heywood, Lancs, CL10 4SP.

Thanks for the news about the Fanzine Peter, you angel. Ricky's promising another round-up of Fanzines next issue, hopefully yours will arrive in time.
ST

AGAINST COMPARISONS

Dear Saffron
I fully agree with Andrew Durant's letter about AMTIX! reviews comparing Spectrum or Commodore 64 games to the Amstrad versions.

It happened again in the December issue of AMTIX!, while reading your review of *Lightforce* one of your reviewers commented on how much better the Spectrum version of the game is.

Does he really think that Amstrad owners want to know how much better another computer version is? Why can't you take an Amstrad game for what it is, like Amstrad Action do.

Apart from this the mag is great so keep up the good work.

Yours faithfully, Geoff Poole, Brandgreen, Redmarly, Glos.

Hold yer horses. Before we go any further I've just had a notion that puts forward a good point of comparing games. If your mate comes up to you and says 'Hey, I've just got so and so on my Spectrum and it's brillo' then you might think, 'Ah ha, that's out for the Amstrad as well. Get that' If the Amstrad version wasn't much cop then you would have been stuck with a duff game. If we tell you that it's worse then fine – you're safe. It also works the other way around. Good eh?
ST

YOURS DRIPPINGLY

Dear Saffron
Firstly the grovel. Lick, creep, lick, lick, grovel, lick. The magazine is now dripping wet.

In December's issue of this great magazine (The best one yet) John Neill of Telford, Shropshire wrote in with loading problems with Firebird's Budget games. I have *Harvey Headbanger, Thrust*, and *Sea Base Delta*. I had also trouble loading them in like John and I found that a lot of fiddling with the cassette volume cured the problems.

Please could you stop slapping post marks and wavey lines all over the letters because sometimes I can hardly see what has been printed.

AMTIX! is a great mag! Keep it up.

Yours lickingly, J Flack, Skelamnthorpe, Huddersfield

You've had problems too? Oh well, we can't all be winners can we?
ST

ACHTUNG MY LITTLE SCHNEIDERS!

Dear Saffron
Let me tell you about Amstrad and Germany. Schneider is doing very well over here (well over there since I'm here!!) and that is good for both you (British) and us (living in Germany), because we only get the best games.

Only shame is that games never get translated, that's why there are so few interests in adventure games. About how long it takes for games to get over here: well there is only one shop selling both AMTIX! and AA and games usually take 3 - 4 months also about 40% of the games reviewed I never saw. This isn't very much better in Britain, however, because shops simply don't bother to stock games which are difficult to get, so even over Christmas one doesn't find many new games round.

Enough said, thanks for your great mag with its comps.

Alexander Pinhow, Schzbrunner Street 5, 1000 Berlin 33, FRG.

It must be a horrendous problem, but never fear, Auntie Aggie is here. Any game you want can be mailed to you. The same goes for the magazine itself. If you want some information write to the Subscription or Mail Order Dept here at the Towers.
ST

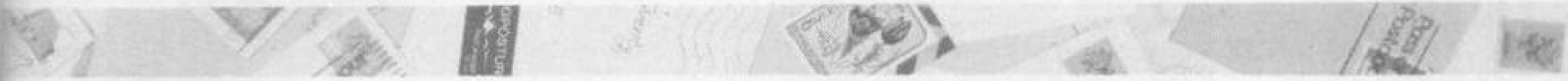
AMAZED OF BRIGHTON

Dear Saffron
I am writing or rather printing to point out something I noticed in your December Edition of AMTIX! The letter in OTS from Glenn Carey says something about the letter he received from Anthony Unknown of Dublin after replying to the request for a pen pal in the mag. He says he was asked if he wanted copied games from him.

I then had a look in the pen pal section of the mag and I was AMAZED when I saw Anthony's name still in this section requesting more pen pals. Surely by this stage you were aware of what he was trying to do. Why did you still print his name in this section? Surely you think he is wrong to copy games like this and therefore should not print his name.

Yours wanting an explanation, Steven Jones, Brighton, East Sussex.

Crumbly, being the silly fool that he is, kept the name in the Pen pals. Honestly if you want anything doing right you gotta do it yourself! It has been rectified now! Ouch, Crumbly has just hit me with my brolly after reading this comment.
ST



BINDERS ARE A BIND

Dear Pinky,
You are not going to like this! You are not going to like it one little bit, and I very much doubt if this will ever see the light of day in the pages of your magazine – or any other magazine that offers binders for that matter.

Ever since William Caxton first started his printing press, I have been collecting publications associated with my many interests. Then old Bill, being ever alert to the main chance, said to me, 'Gadzooks and oddsbodkins, William, thou art verily and indeed in a right old muck-up. Thou canst not find one copy from another! 'Tis indeed time I helped thee out.'

So, what did he do? Offered me the first-ever binders, of course. Mug that I was, I coughed up my hard-earned groats and burned the candle at both ends sorting out the magazines, laboriously sewingthem into the binders. When finished, I thought to myself, thought I; now I can find anything I want in two or more ticks, or maybe even a tock!

Silly, silly me! What happened? The books, in their handsome binders, piled up and up, until I saw, with horror, the roof of my house being raised from the walls. Drastic action was needed, so the three of us, me, myself, and I, held a conference, and we unanimously came to the following conclusions.

I kept the magazines so that I could refer back to specific articles: that was the short and simple reason, but was it working? Of course not. The greater bulk of the contents I would never need again, and, unless I made a list of the items requiring further reading, trying to find one was like looking for the proverbial needle in the haystack, wading through index after index, eventually giving up in sheer despair. So, I had two alternatives, get rid of the lot, or buy rubber walls. The former won hands down. I extracted a few of the articles I knew I would want again, and disposed of the rest. It took four pantechnicons – I kid you not! The paper mill was delighted.

Then a new love entered my life; it was called 'Computing'. Aha, methinks, this will mean yet more magazines: I will not be caught the fiftieth time round. Shall I tell you what I do now? Are you agog with curiosity? Probably not, but I am going to tell you, all the same.

When I have read a magazine, virtually from cover to cover, and have highlighted those articles of particular interest – reviews of selected software and hardware, peeks and pokes, etc., my sister does the same thing. I then remove (sacrilege?) the pages noted, and file them in a certain order in an appropriate folder. How easy it is, now, to find that article that would have been elusive as the Scarlet Pimpernel, and how marvellous it is, to be able to move around the house without stumbling over columns of printware!

William Smith, Windsor, Berkshire

Ingenious my dear William.
ST

TIME TO GO

Is that it? Three measly pages? No more? Gawd! Disgraceful! Someone is going to get seriously hurt because of this. Where's me brolly? C'mere you horrid art people. Three pages, I'll give you three pages around the head and if that isn't enough I'll ram this joystick right up yer . . .

Hello readers, Malcolm here. Enough of her rantings, just be nice to her. Write to, SAFFY (Gimme more pages) TREVASKIS, AMTIX!, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE. SY8 1DB.

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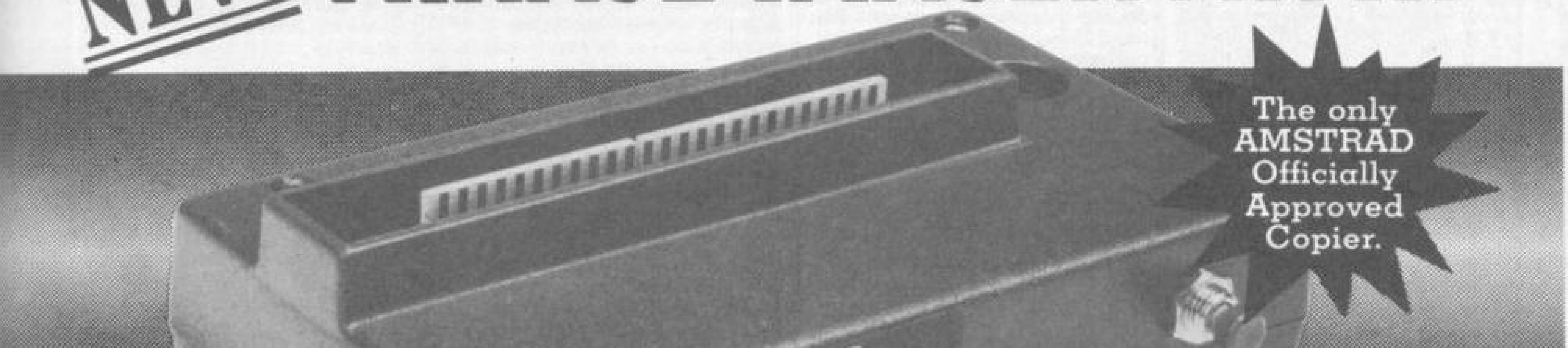

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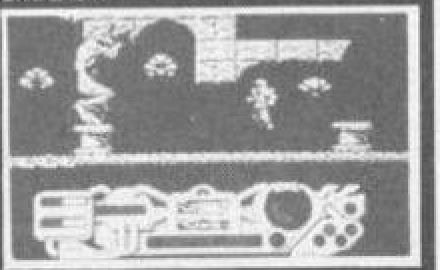
News

HERE COMES CAULDRON III?

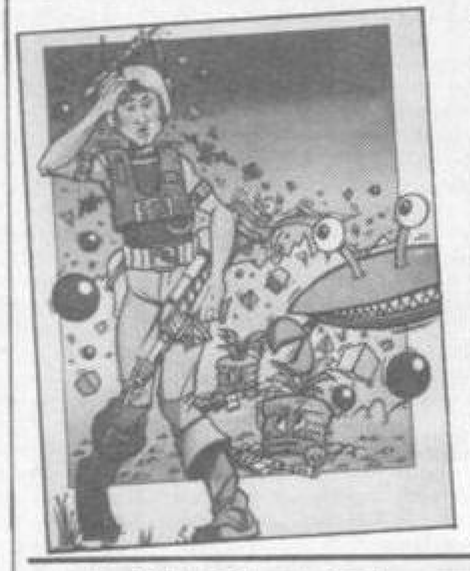
Palace Software have released the follow up to *Cauldron* and *Cauldron II*. Entitled *The Sacred Armour of Antiriad* it is claimed to be a visually stunning arcade adventure.

It is the first game to be written and designed by comic artist, Dan Malone. Behind the game lies the legend of the sacred armour and to tell this story Dan has created a 16 page mini comic that will accompany the game.

The cassette version costs £8.99 while the disk version is an extra £4.



COSMIC SHOCKS FROM MARTECH



Gosh the universe is cracking up just like the staff at AMTIX! Towers. Everything is going very weird because armies of bouncing balls are on the attack. Carrots are carrying machine guns and looking ultra mean.

It's obviously a task for a super human being but who's available? These days super beings are in big demand. It has to be the *Cosmic Shock Absorber*, a fourth division superhero.

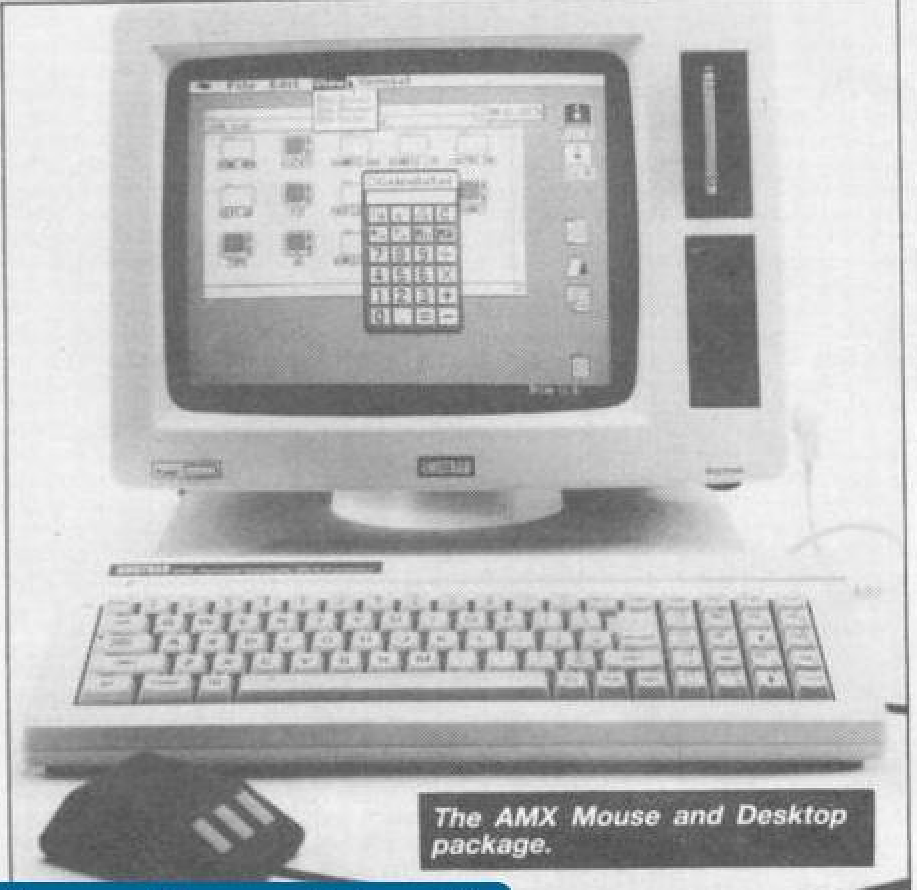
The game is a fast shoot em up which is written by Chris Fayers, and a preview of it appears in this issue.

JOYCE GETS A MOUSE

A package that can transform the PCW8256 from being in the main a word processor into a multi function office tool has been launched by **Advanced memory Systems** of Warrington. It combines the company's much acclaimed *AMX Mouse* with the latest in desk top technology.

The appeal of the package is it boosts the performance of both the 8256 and 8512 machines by building in a range of accessories. At one and the same time it turns the Joyce into a desk diary, memo pad, telephone address book, alarm clock, calculator and even an electronic puzzle.

The *AMX Mouse* and Desktop package costs £79.95.



The AMX Mouse and Desktop package.

FOOTBALL FORTUNES

Our super sub editor, Ciaran Brennan, travelled down to the big city recently to attend the launch of the latest game from **CDS**, *Brian Clough's Football Fortunes*.

Apparently the game can be played by between 2 and 5 players with each one taking on the role of a football team manager. The game is claimed to feature a 10 strong league, the F A Cup and three European Cup Competitions, four skill levels, five different types of football players, variable game length, a computer controlled die, and constantly updated league tables.

We're not sure Ciaran will ever make a football manager but he did enjoy a tour of Wembley Stadium and the chance to meet the man himself!

The assembled hacks of the world of computer journalism are pictured being introduced to Nobby Stiles' jersey which was actually worn by him in the 1966 World Cup semi-final against Portugal. Ciaran (centre) had one small request to the boys at Wembley – could you have it washed before the next time? It didn't half stink!

THE 1986 READERS TOP 20 VOTED GAMES

While we wait for the remaining votes from readers to come in for the Readers Awards of 1986 we, at AMTIX! Towers, thought it might be a good idea to look back over the year and put together a Top 20 chart based on votes sent in by you ever so kind people.

Our clever Crumbly Editor, who's pretty hot when it comes to arithmetic, (Pah! - RE) worked out a sensational formula. Well actually it wasn't all that clever, but we don't like to discourage his efforts. Basically he awarded a game 20 points each time it made the number one spot, down to one point if it reached number 20 in the AMTIX! chart. Clever huh?

It soon became very evident that the top game, from the point of view of points gained, would be *Yie Ar Kung Fu* which was light years ahead of the rest of the field.

For the statisticians amongst you no fewer than 60 games made their mark in the AMTIX! readers chart during the year, and apart from *Yie Ar Kung Fu*, which held the top spot for seven of the 11 months (there was no chart in the January cover issue), only three other games reached the coveted top spot, namely *Elite*, *Highway Encounter*, and *Spindizzy*. Here's the chart.

1:*YIE AR KUNG FU* Imagine
2:*ELITE* Firebird
3:*SORCERY PLUS* Amsoft
4:*WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST* Melbourne House
5:*WHO DARES WINS 11* Alligata
6:*BRUCE LEE* US Gold
7:*SPINDIZZY* Electric Dreams
8:*SPY VS SPY* Beyond
9:*SPELLBOUND* MAD
10:*BATMAN* Ocean
11:*GET DEXTER* PSS/ERE
12:*HIGHWAY ENCOUNTER* Vortex
13:*COMMANDO* Elite
14:*WAY OF THE TIGER* Gremlin Graphics
15:*GREEN BERET* Imagine
16:*SORCERY* Virgin Games
17:*DALEY THOMPSON'S SUPERTEST* Ocean
18:*KNIGHT LORE* Ultimate
19:*BARRY MCGUIGAN'S BOXING* Activision
20:*KNIGHT TYME* MAD

MIAMI VICE

Ocean, £9.95, joystick or keys

The word is out on the streets of Miami. A one million dollar contraband shipment is due in on Thursday morning, for collection by the old fashioned gangster Mr 'J'. It is midnight Sunday and that's all the info the mega cool and hard crime busting duo, Tubbs and Crocket, have so now they must hit the streets and put the squeeze on the network of dealers.

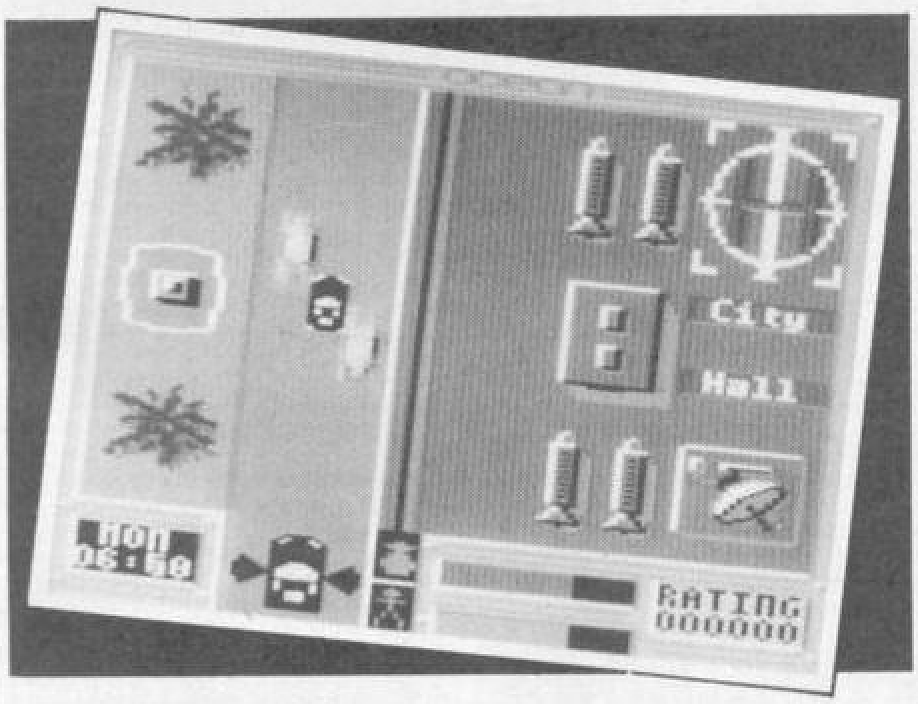
Supplied is a list of names of suspects, their location and the times at which they will be there. the crime busting duo must rip around the streets in their speedy car and locate the various bars in which the suspects are located. Precise timing is needed for if you pull up to the location prematurely the bad guys will leg it. Once someone is apprehended he, and any evidence he may be carrying, must be taken and dropped off at City Hall where he will be interrogated. Information obtained will scroll across the bottom of the screen and points are awarded.

If you should crash the car when you have obtained evidence or a suspect they will be lost and no points will be awarded. Along the roads you will encounter red cars containing suspects; these can be shot from your car. The more information you obtain the closer you will get to stopping the crime but remember you only have till Thursday morning to do so. If you fail to stop the crime by then you loose all your score. Points are also lost for destroying civilian (non red) cars, each wound on Crockett or Tubbs, failing to arrest a suspect, after having threatened to do so, and having a bribe rejected.

Richard

CRITICISM

I just can't make up my mind which one I detest the most - the game or the TV series. It's probably the game. It's another TV license y'know, do you get this kind forboding? The problem that's most apparent is that the game is so unplayable; the control method on the car is extremely poor. One slight mistake and you end up back at the beginning of the course. How Tedious. From beginning to end this held no interest for me, there's just nothing in the game to grab your attention.



Mass

CRITICISM

The first thing that struck me was the rather poor rendition of the MIAMI VICE theme – it's almost as stuttery as our the car of our heroes. Steering the car around the streets I found to be damn hard to get used to and I crashed many a time before I managed to get to a specified bar at the correct time. When I finally stopped at the right place a red car ran into me. It was at this time, after a long period of unsuccessful play, that I gave up through frustration. A far from impressive game that I don't think I will return to of my own accord.

PRESENTATION 59%
Well explained, times, places and tips given.

GRAPHICS 45%
Plain, unimaginative - YUCCH!

SOUND 42%
Poor tune, limited FX.

PLAYABILITY 36%
Much too hard to get used to.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 29%
Frustrating to the point of capitulation

VALUE FOR MONEY 29%
Honestly not worth the money.

OVERALL 35%
A basically unimaginative game.

THE GOONIES

US Gold, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

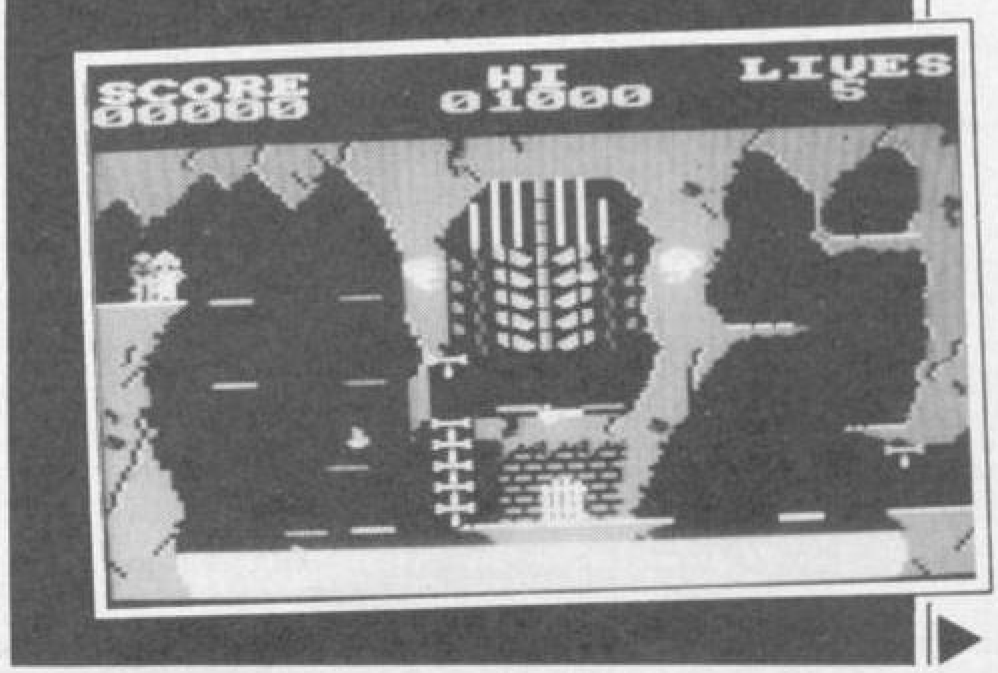
Well over a year ago Steven Spielberg launched his latest film, The Goonies now, by the miracle of the cathode ray tube, it's brought to our monitors in the form of a puzzle adventure courtesy of US Gold. The Goonies' goal is to find One-eyed Willy's Pirate Ship which, like all good pirate ships, houses lots of money and jewels and all the kind of things that means you can buy a house in Beverley Hills. In playing the game you must co-operate with the team, Mikey, Brand, Mouth, Data, Stef, Andy and Chunk to locate the treasure to save your families homes from foreclosures.

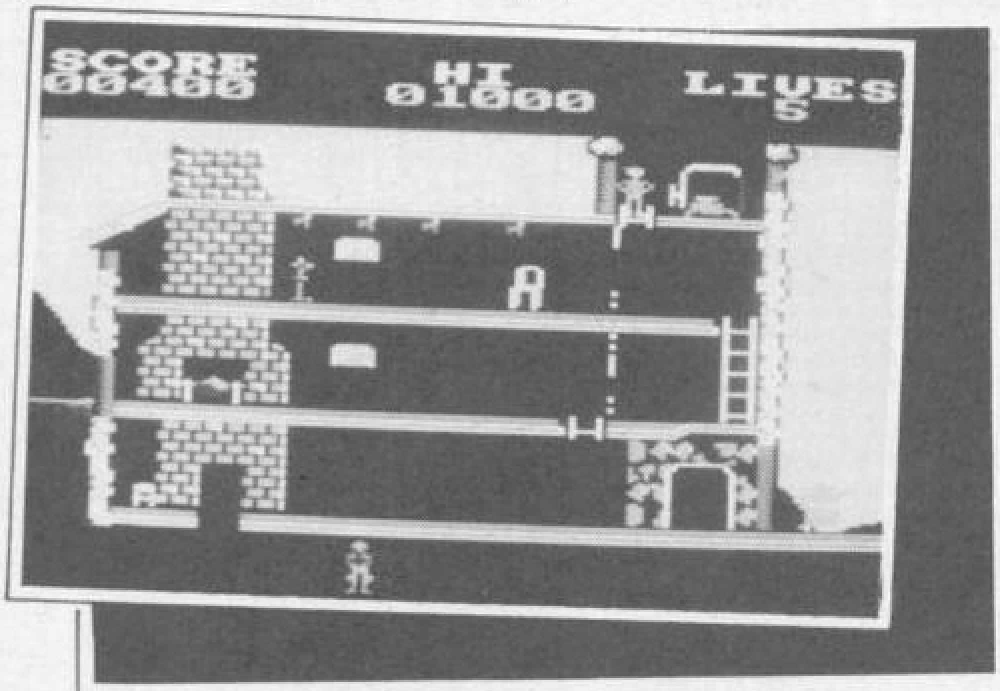
However, life isn't going to be that easy; the evil Fratelli family are also after the loot and will try to keep you from reaching te pirate

Anthony

CRITICISM

After such a late delivery it'll be interesting to see whether anybody takes any notice of the film licence. I, for one, had to think twice about the film and what remote connection it had with the game. As a game GOONIES all appears rather average, nothing in it has been executed very well – it all seems rather mediocre. The graphics are not used well they're slightly flickery and because of the small size of everything it soon becomes difficult to work out exactly what is going on. The puzzles can prove interesting for a limited time but after that it all fades away into oblivion. I doubt if I'll play it again.





Richard

CRITICISM

Not one that really captures the imagination, the game lacks all those things that make you want to play it again. The puzzles can prove frustrating at first as a great deal of timing is involved, but once you know what you are doing than each is completed fairly easily. I don't see myself playing GOONIES very often, but I think I may come back to it at times.

ship and obtaining the treasure. Other terrors lurk in wait for some unsuspecting adventurer to stumble upon; such nastiness as hissing chambers, deadly bats, poisonous slime, demonic flying skulls and a vicious octopus.

The adventure begins in a large house and your objective is to escape without being captured by Mama Fratelli who paces the ground floor relentlously. The only way to divert her attention is to manoeuvre one of the characters over to the window and throw money out. This will instantly bring her running, giving you and your matey just enough time to escape through the hole in the floor. Progressing through the various screens, other puzzles await the treasure seekers as they continue their quest for lots and lots of luverrly money. Greedy beggars.

PRESENTATION 56%
Nothing stunning, all quite flat.
GRAPHICS 45%
Blocky. Tried but failed.
SOUND 30%
A feeble tune that does little to inspire.
PLAYABILITY 52%
A few interesting puzzles . . .
ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 38%
. . . but nothing to really hold your interest.
VALUE FOR MONEY 32%
Pricey for the little it has to offer.
OVERALL 40%
All a bit limp.

BREAKTHRU

US Gold, £9.99 cass, £14.99 disk, joystick or keys

Mr and Mrs Cokyttup are going on holiday, they've been working hard for so very long and feel in need of a break. Off they hop into the old Princess and trample off for a touring holiday. Just as they are setting off the inhabitants of the places they are planning to visit get wind of their arrival and make preparations. You see, Mr and Mrs Cokyttup have this appalling tendency of causing havoc everywhere they go and nobody wants them in their country.

Hence the title of the game, Breakthru; you must control the Cokyttup's car as they try to break through the countries they are visiting and finally get back to the airport to make it back to their semi detached in Suburbia. The first place their clapped-out car visits is the Rocky Mountains. They are both enjoying the scenery when out come all these nasty Mounties and try to kill the dear old people off. Avoid the mines that have been planted in the ground and help Mrs Cokyttup as she fires her trusty automatic cannon that she just happens to have in her handbag. On the way you might come across landslides which have fallen on the roads. Luckily the car has super jump power and can leap over any oncoming nastiness.

Having survived Canada it's off south to breakthru the bridge. Watch out for defenders of the bridge which are reinforced by missile firing armoured fighting vehicles. The bridge has been blown up and so must be jumped in several locations.

Other countries include the Prairie of South America where water becomes the obstacle, and the city of New York where evil and vicious muggers want to get their hands on Mrs Cockyttup's handbag. Finally it's onto the airfield to catch the plane and back home just in time to watch Songs of Praise with a nice cup of tea.

Richard

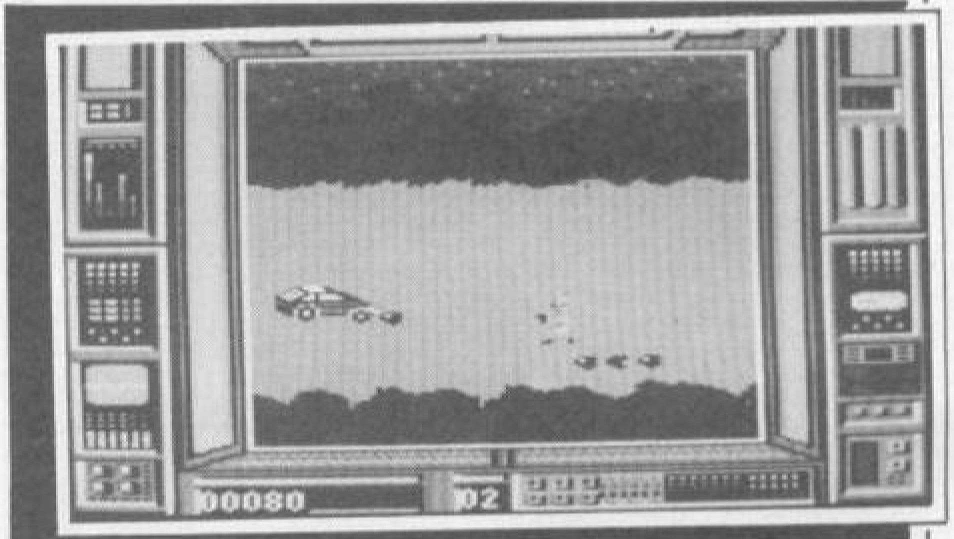
CRITICISM

I thought US Gold would have learnt their lesson from BEACH HEAD II but oh no, here we go again. This is even worse. It has jerky badly defined graphics that are simply appalling. The start is awful – they can't be bothered to draw the screen to start with, It just scrolls on. Bluurgh! The transition from scene to scene is dreadful – no tasteful merge just plunge straight into somewhere different. The actual playing area seems so small with most of the screen taken up with pointless and worthless decoration. This sort of software makes me want to throw up. Excuse me . . .

Paul

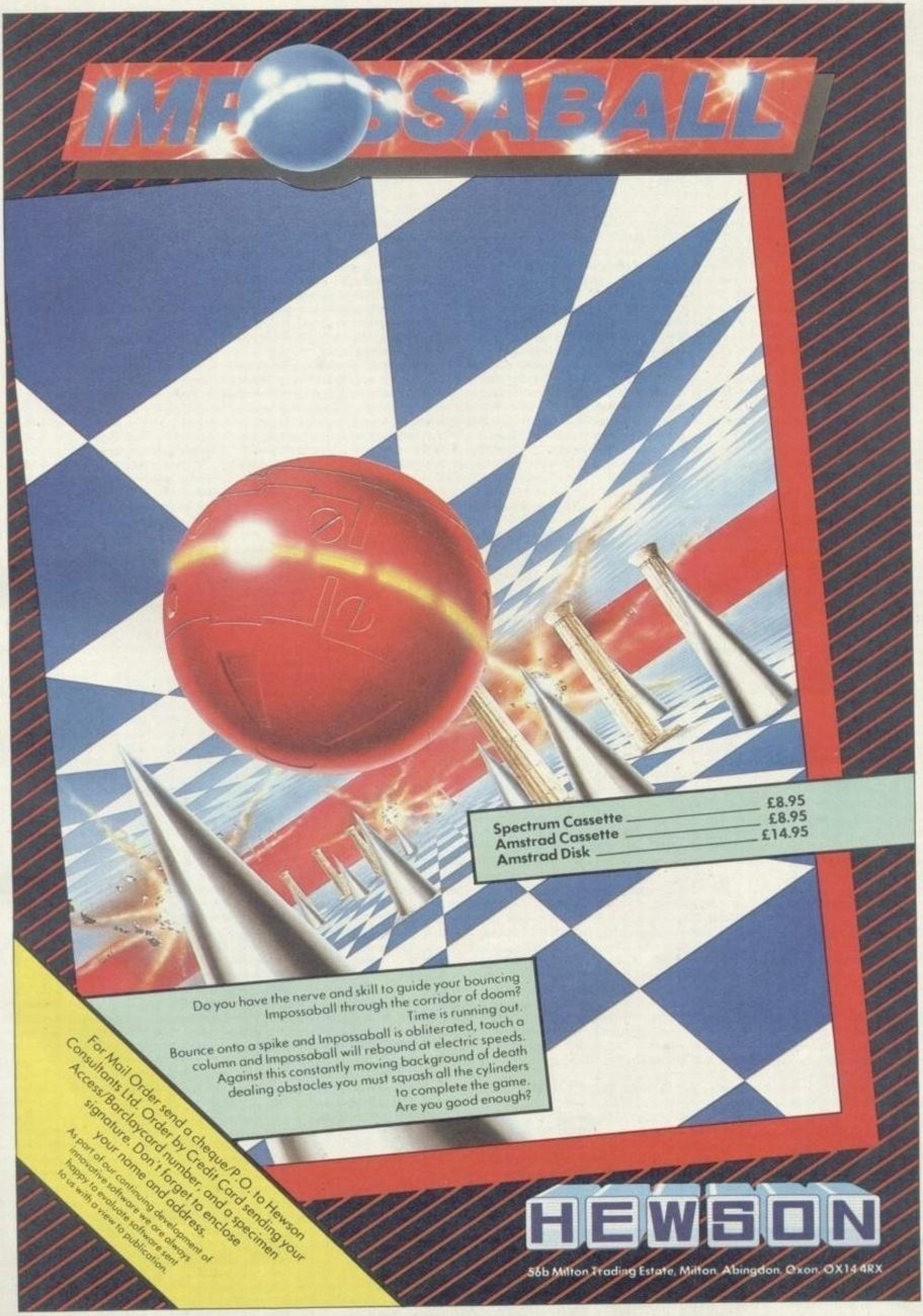
CRITICISM

Har har har! What a lot of jesters they are at US Gold. Very funny . . . now I've stopped laughing and wiped the tears from my eyes, can I have the real BREAKTHRU game please? No? What do you mean this is it? Har har! Stop muckin' about. You're serious? No..go' on, your pullin' me leg. your not. Oh . . . Oh dear, ho hum . . . well what can I say but BREAKTHRU isn't, a break through that is!. From your ill defined vehicle to the purple faced soldiers, this game is very funny and not to be taken seriously. I feel very sorry for the punters that have already shelled out their hard earned tenners for what very obviously is an early April Fool joke. DON'T BUY THIS!!!!!!



PRESENTATION 21%
Insufficient instructions, no options, no score bored.
GRAPHICS 12%
Jerky, ill defined, and generally appalling.
SOUND 9%
Boom and kaboom.
PLAYABILITY 6%
Yawn.
ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 5%
Double Yawn.
VALUE FOR MONEY 4%
A tenner? Har har!
OVERALL 5%
Bummer of the year already.

IMPOSSABALL



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GAUNTLET

US Gold, £14.99 disk, joystick and keys

The world has been plunged into eternal darkness, where food is scarce and evil rules supreme. Your objective is simple – you must fight to survive. Four heroes against countless enemies, either helping one another or fighting for themselves.

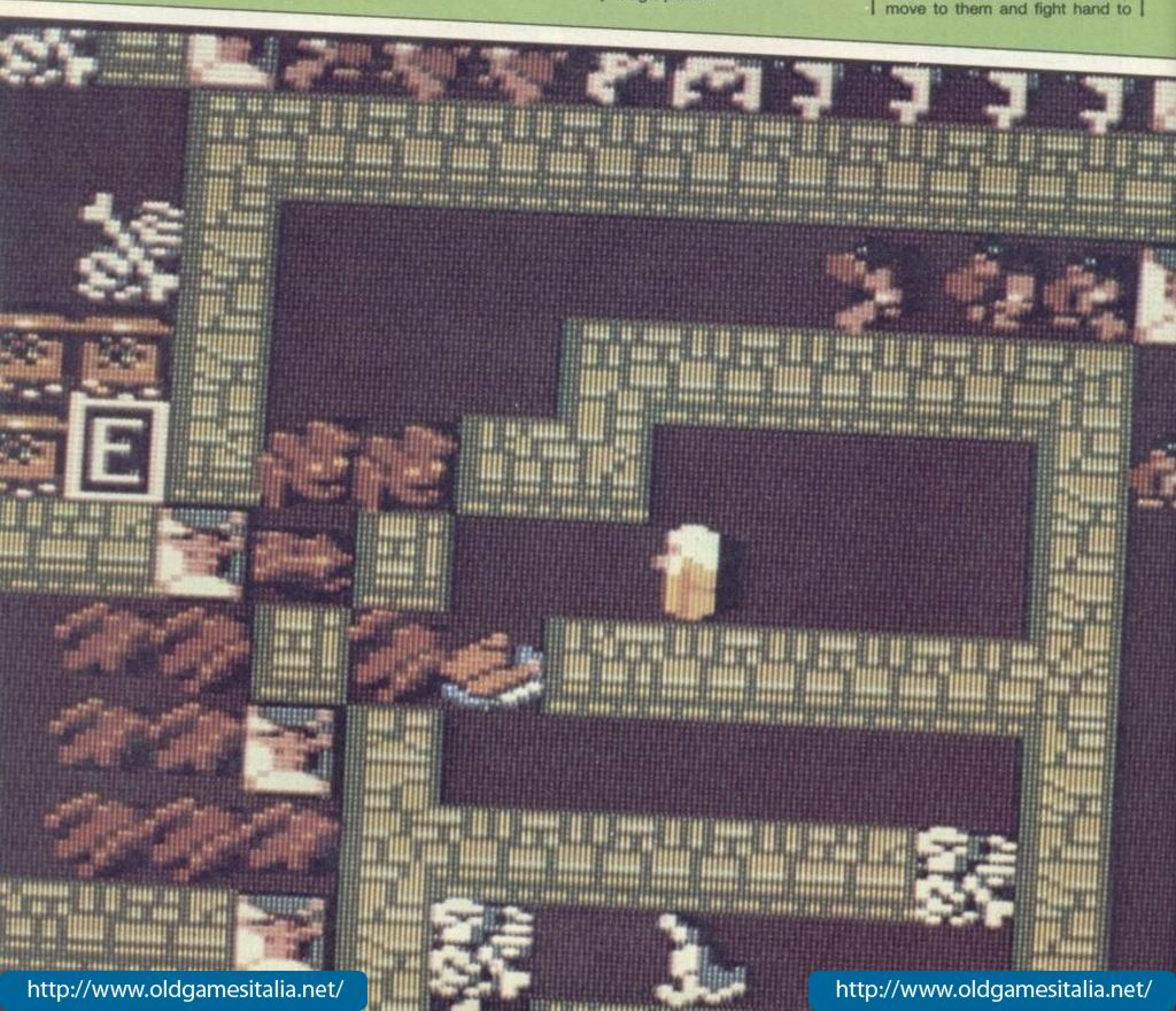
Gauntlet is a one or two player role-playing maze game, in which the player(s) can choose to control one of four heroes; THOR the Warrior, THYRA the Valkyrie, MERLIN the Wizard and QUESTOR the Elf. Each of these has different degrees of four separate fighting skills (Armour, Shot Power, Hand To Hand and Magic Power).

Thor has tough skin eliminating 20% of damage, excellent shot power and hand to hand fighting abilities, but he is a poor magician. Thyra has a shield eliminating 30% of damage, poor shot power, is a good hand to hand fighter, and possesses moderate magic powers. Merlin has no armour, good shot power, is poor at hand to hand but has excellent magic powers. Finally Questor is equipped with armour that eliminates 10% of damage, poor shot power, only moderate hand to hand fighting ability but with very good magic power.

Six kinds of nasties pour out of the generators which lie throughout the dungeons. Each of these generators create a specific type of monster. There are three levels of generator, the strongest of which produces the toughest monsters. Monsters also come in three strengths, the most powerful taking three hits to kill.

Ghosts: contact with ghosts must be avoided, as just one touch drains your energy. Once they hit you they disappear. Shoot them, don't run into them.

Grunts: are armed with clubs and run up to you and smack you over the head. You can either move to them and fight hand to



■ Rich and Mass have said everything, the game has all the elements of the original (plus a few extras from GAUNTLET 2 – the arcade version that is.) Let's hope the expansion set gives you as much of a challenge as the original. For those of you who think you could make a screen as difficult as those already present, then you can send your design to US Gold and they may include it in the finished version. Go and get a copy now it's great.

anthony

hand or shoot them.

Demons: if possible demons throw fireballs at you, otherwise they run up and bite you again and again. Fireballs hurt more than biting. Hand to hand fighting and shooting dispose of them.

Lobbers: try to hurl rocks at you from over the walls. They also run away from you, so try to shoot them or trap them in corners for hand to hand fighting.

Sorcerers: intermittently disappear to try and fool you. Once they're invisible your shots pass right through them. You can engage them in hand to hand combat.

Death: is the most dangerous. He cannot be shot nor beaten by hand to hand fighting. Once in contact with you, he drains 200 of your health points and then dies. The only way to kill him is with magic.

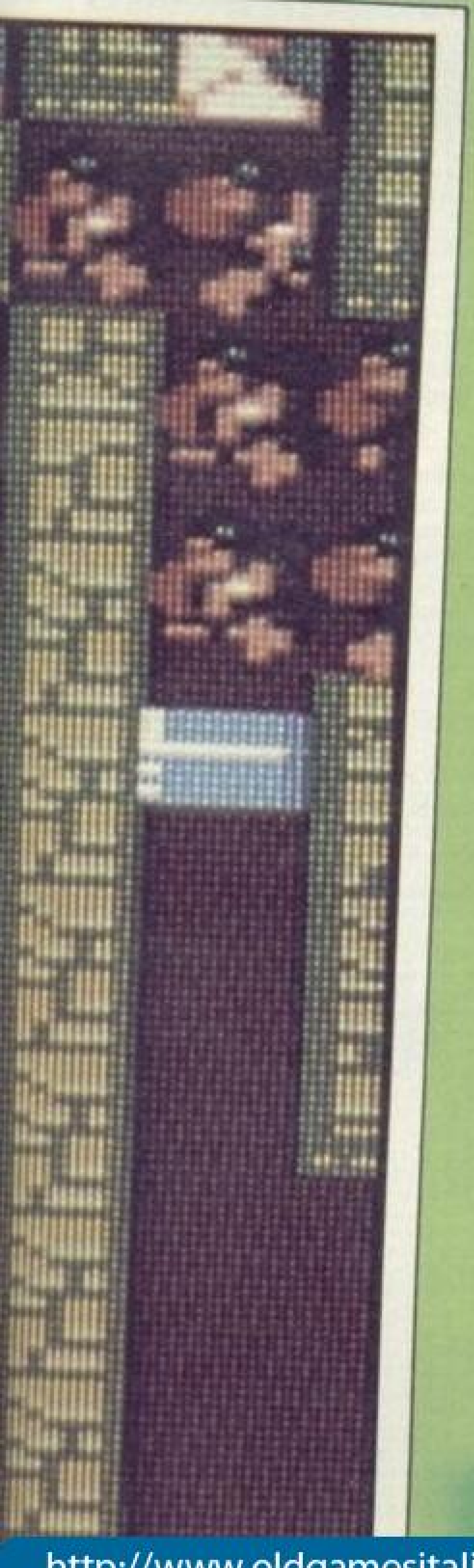
Once a dungeon is entered there is at least one exit – a black square acting rather like a transporter pad, taking you to the next dungeon and a higher level, or to a specific level as indicated by a number on the exit. While doing battle with the monsters there are certain items that can be picked up simply by moving into them. Chests of treasure serve only to increase your score, while plates of food and brown bottles of cider increase health by 100 (and your score by the same amount). Beware as some bottles of cider are poisoned and decrease your health. Blue potion bottles can be shot to destroy monsters, but they prove more effective if picked up and used. The effectiveness of a potion is dependent on the magic power of your chosen hero. Six special potions, coming in potion bottles with labels, have a variety of effects, for example, extra armour, extra magic power, extra shot speed and power, extra fight power and extra pick up power. A magic invisibility amulet gives the holder limited invincibility, enabling the player to run around killing the monsters without damaging his health.

The keys which are found lying around the dungeons are necessary if a player wishes to pass through the blue doors (these open on contact if a key is held). If you have no keys, the doors automatically open after a certain time. Most of the walls in the dungeons are inpenetrable, although some crumble when shot. Glowing patterns on the floors (traps) open new areas of the maze once stepped on. Glowing red discs on the floor transport players to nearest visible disc. If several discs are visible and the same distance away then one is chosen randomly.

When an exit is found and used you may find yourself in a treasure room. These are a sort of bonus room where the fight is not against monsters but time. Here you must collect as many treasure chests as possible, and at the same time locate an exit before the time runs out. If successful, you obtain a bonus of 100 times the number of chests collected, but if you fail you gain no bonus and simply move onto the next dungeon.

Your score, health points and objects being carried are shown at the bottom of the screen. The health points start off at 2000 and count down. The rest is up to you, the less contact with monsters and the more food you pick up, the healthier you stay.

New players can enter the game whenever they like by pressing the fire button. If a second character was not chosen at the start of the game, the computer randomly chooses one for the player to use. If a player dies he is able to re-enter the game, as long as the other is still battling away (the re-entered player's score starts from scratch).



■ GAUNTLET is simply amazing – you can pleasantly stroll into a seemingly quiet room and suddenly you encounter literally hundreds of monsters on the same screen. You'll never be able to say that there's not a lot to do in this game. The playability is superb, and the ability to enter another character at any stage of the game makes it a joy to play. An extremely engrossing game. The ratio of food to nasties ensures that you'll have just enough to keep you alive in the later levels – and there's always the worry of picking up the poison cider. GAUNTLET, I'm sure, will appeal to everyone. A totally addictive game. Brilliant.

Mass

■ So this is it is it? This is what the big fuss is about? And believe me it's been well worth all the wait and the hype. There's just so much to do in GAUNTLET; the complex of rooms is so expansive and the variety of monsters and spells are so flexible that it's got so much going for it. On first sight I thought the graphics were a bit on the small side, but in play they work superbly – nothing gets cluttered and you can see what's happening at all times. The sound mirrors the arcade game perfectly. Oh, believe me this game is just a dream to play and watch, the ultimate arcade conversion which has come out with flying colours, it's brilliant. Get it, any way you can, just get it!

Richard

PRESENTATION 95%
Great packaging, excellent selection of screens.

GRAPHICS 92%
Small, detailed but plenty of 'em.

SOUND 91%
Nice tune playing at start and in between screens, plenty of FX.

PLAYABILITY 97%
Superbly fast and furious.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 96%
Action to last forever.

VALUE FOR MONEY 93%
Plenty to do for your money.

OVERALL 95%
Simply an amazing role playing maze game.

AMTIX! Accolade

DONKEY KONG

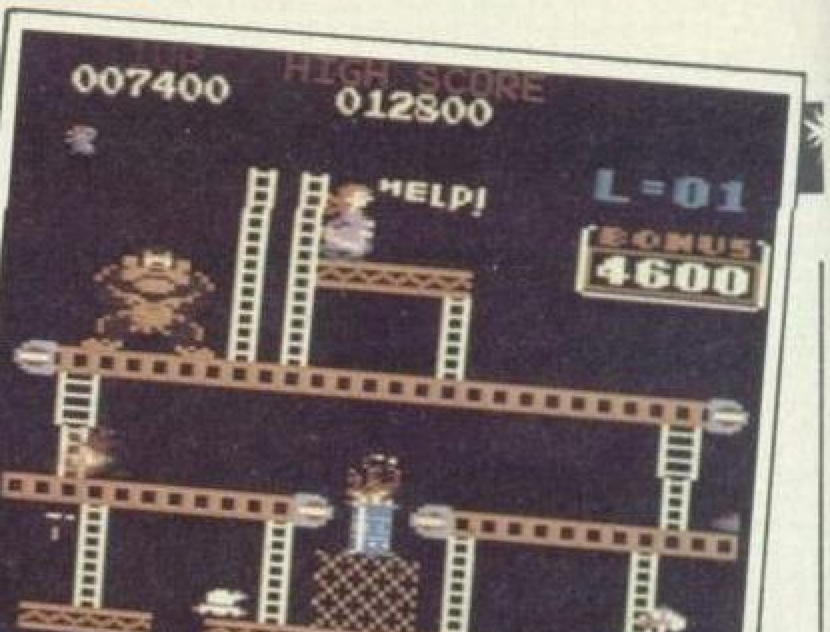
Ocean, £8.95 cass, joystick only

Mario! Mario! Mario! That plaintive cry rings out across a deserted building site from the delectable Lucia — Mario's bride to be. This whole adventure started as a normal pleasant day out at the zoo for the happy couple, when suddenly a giant ape broke loose and made off with the luscious Lucia. Unfortunately for Mario, Donkey Kong (for it was he) has taken her up a partly constructed skyscraper and is in no mood to let the poor girl go.

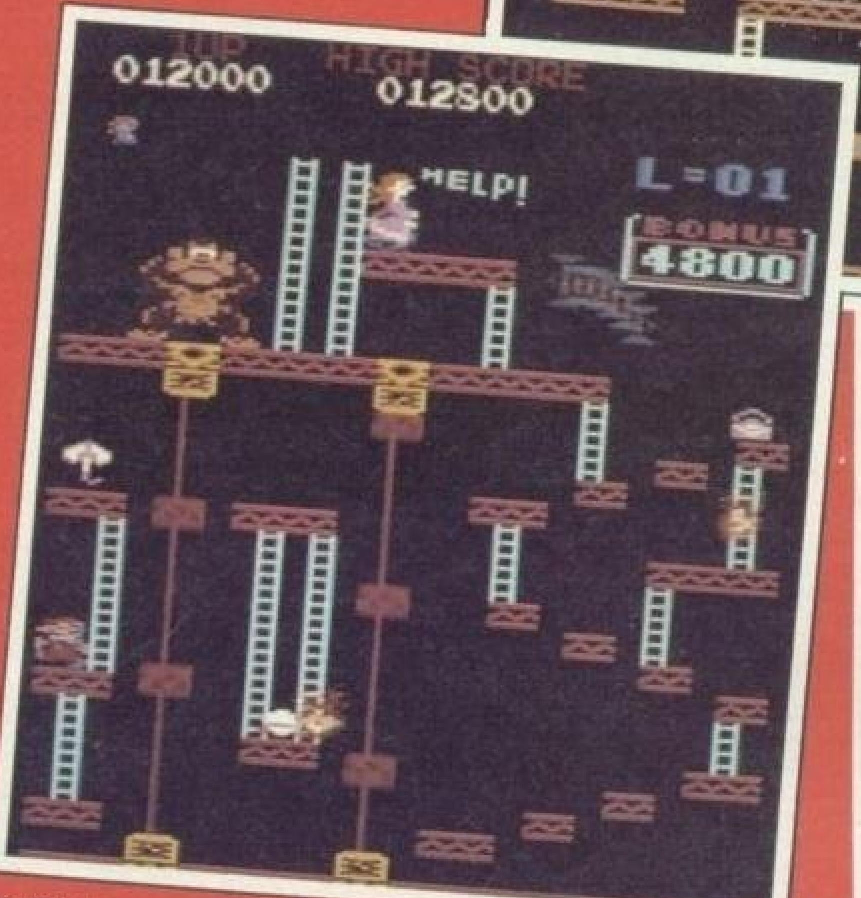
Anthony

CRITICISM

I was a little worried that this conversion of one of my favourite arcade games would turn out to be just another washout like Killer Gorilla, but I was pleasantly surprised. The game is graphically very close to the original, and the playability is just like that of the arcade. The arcade machine has its screen turned by 90 degrees so that the playing area is vertically longer that the width. To get around turning your own monitor on its side they have changed the size of the Amstrad screen. All these touches make it a very faithful version of an ageing game.



'Heeeeelp!' Cries the the gorgeous pouting Lucia as Mario is preparing to make his way up.



The third screen has Mario about to jump on an elevator to rescue his loved one from the hairy one. Grrrr!

Mass

CRITICISM

Wow, it's just as I remember it from the arcades many moons ago. This direct conversion from the arcade version has kept all its appeal, and is still great fun to play. The graphics are very neat and the jingles are near enough the same as the original. Playing it now I found the first screen the hardest of the lot — strange I know, but the others are very predictable and once done they're no problem. I like it, but then again I always have.

Richard

CRITICISM

I was a little dubious when I heard that another variant of Kong was about to grace our screens, but this is the one. It really is a direct conversion, making great use of the solid colour available on the Amstrad (which ranks it way above the rest). As with GALIVAN, the programmers have tried to go for an arcade size screen, but instead of shortening the width of the screen they've lengthened it so that the game carries on in the border. Everything on screen is laid out in an uncomplicated manner, so that there is hardly any confusion on what is going on. It's a great conversion that is immensely playable and a must for Kong freaks everywhere.

Undaunted, Mario starts the perilous climb to the top to rescue his beloved.

Mario's quest consists of scaling four levels, each one depicted by a separate screen. In the first screen you are presented with a series of inclined platforms and ladders which you must climb. Kong is none too passive though, and tries his best to knock you off by hurling barrels along the girders. The yellow barrels are simply a hazard to be avoided or leaped over on the way up, but if he should throw a blue barrel it will catch light at the bottom of the screen and turn into a fireball, which starts off in hot pursuit of you. As with all of the screens (except the third), there are two suspended hammers for you to use. Picking up one of these puts you in splatter mode and lets you destroy the barrels or flames that come after you. The only problem with using these hammers is that you cannot climb ladders or jump barrels while you have one in your hands.

On the second screen Mario finds himself on a moving conveyor belt, which, of all things, transports custard pies around — these must be avoided or once again leaped over. Scattered along the screens are Lucia's personal effects which she has dropped as a trail for Mario — picking these up will give you extra points. When on a conveyor belt, Mario finds it hard to run against the flow and barely moves at all, running with the belt zips him along the screen at a breakneck pace.

On screen three Mario has to contend with the lifts. Mis-timing a leap onto one of these will send him hurtling to the bottom of the screen (and consequently lose one of his three lives). Once past the lifts, Mario finds that he has to avoid the sproingy things which bounce across the top of the screen and fall at him like Wall Street businessmen on a bad day.

At last Mario reaches the top, but he's still not quite finished. He knows that he would stand no chance against Kong face to face, so he cunningly starts knocking the rivets out of the ironwork in order to collapse Kong's platform, this leaves the irate primate flapping his arms in despair before he finally crashes to the ground. Once again picking up hammers will allow you to dispose of the many fireballs that chase you around this screen.

After all this effort, the only reward Mario gets for his heroism is a quick kiss and cuddle from Lucia, before Kong recovers and whisks her off to greater heights. Mario must start all over again but this time it's not so easy.

PRESENTATION 82%
Fine — tells you every thing you need to know.

GRAPHICS 80%
Nothing exceptional, but then it never was.

SOUND 70%
Few jingles and the odd spot FX.

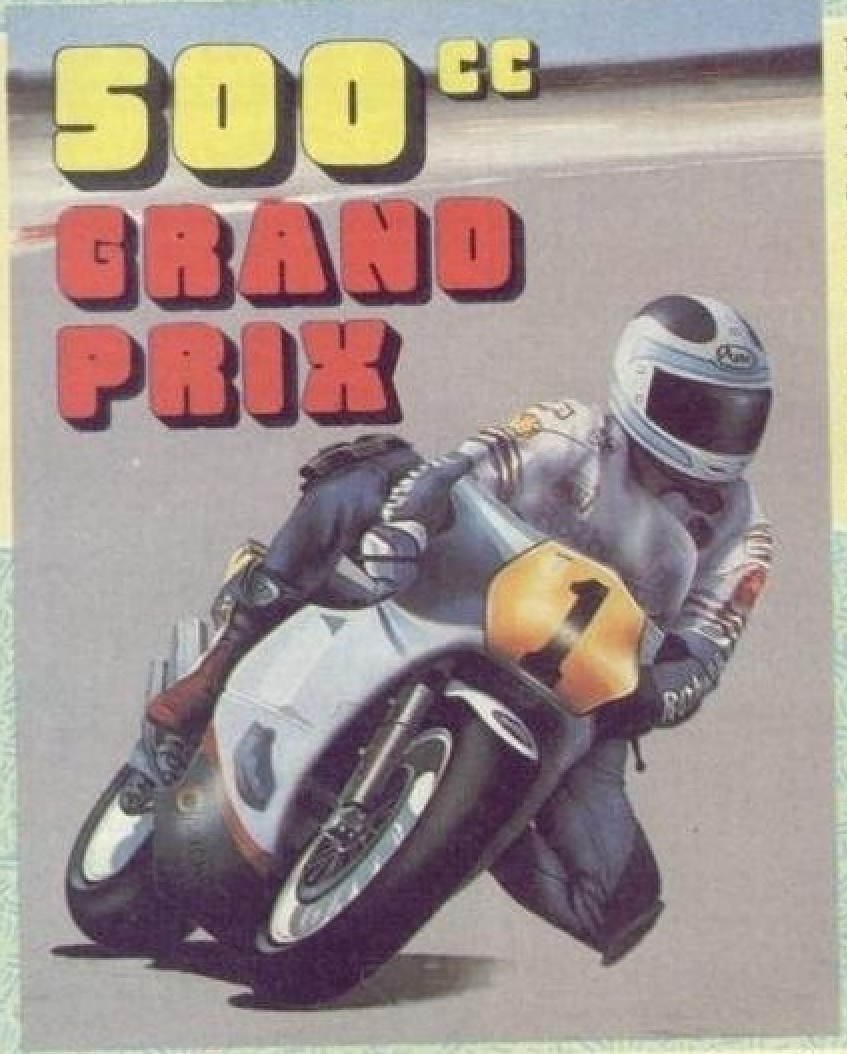
PLAYABILITY 88%
It just is!

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 86%
Just as compulsive as it was in the arcade.

VALUE FOR MONEY 75%
Reasonable, if you're a Kong addict.

OVERALL 84%
The best Kong variant to date.

NEW from Loriciels



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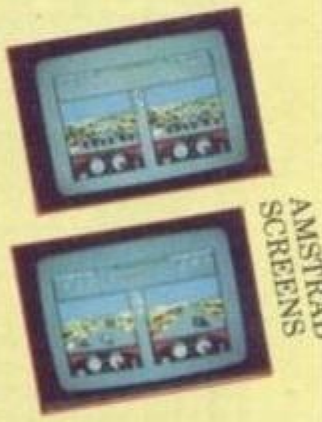

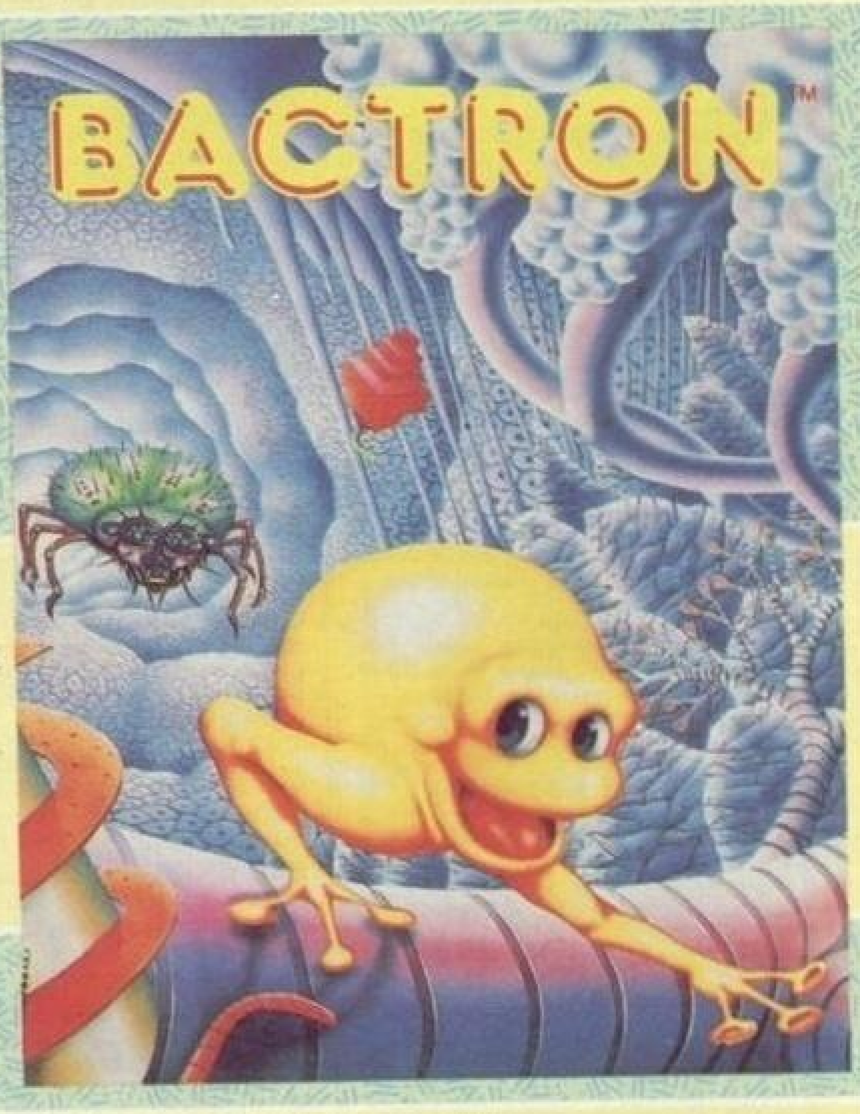

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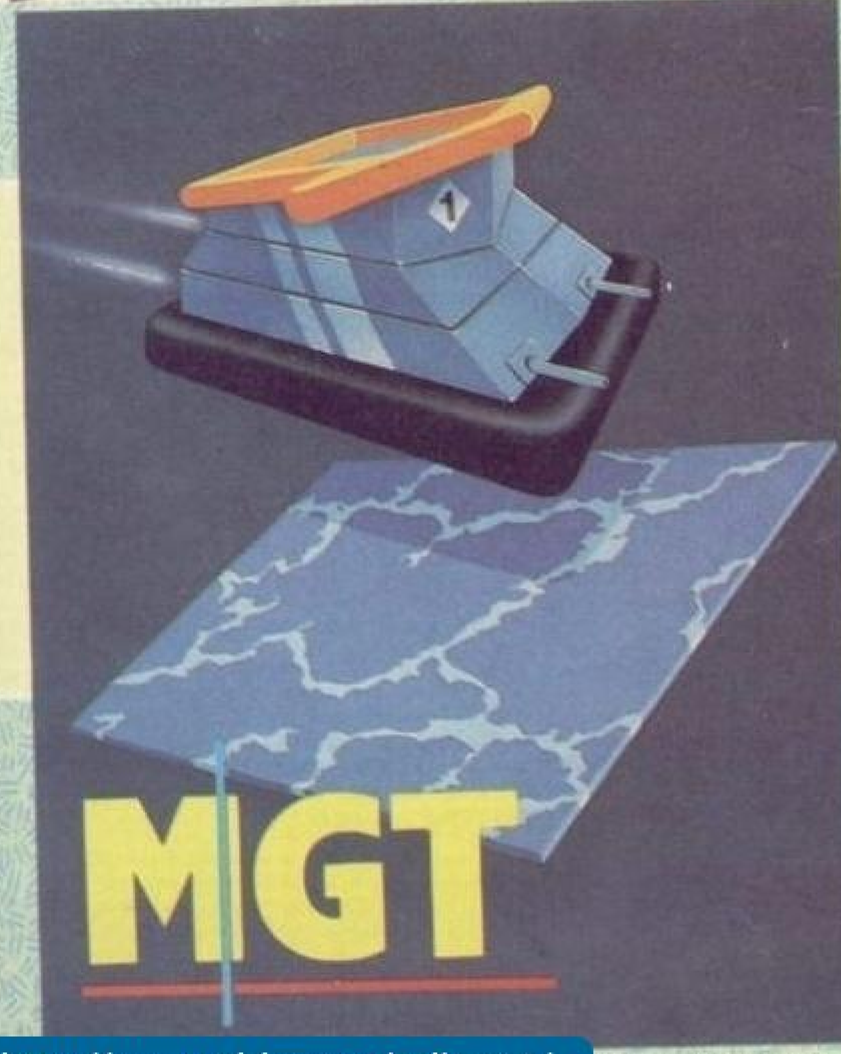

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DYNAMITE DAN II

DR BLITZEN AND THE ISLANDS OF ARCANUM

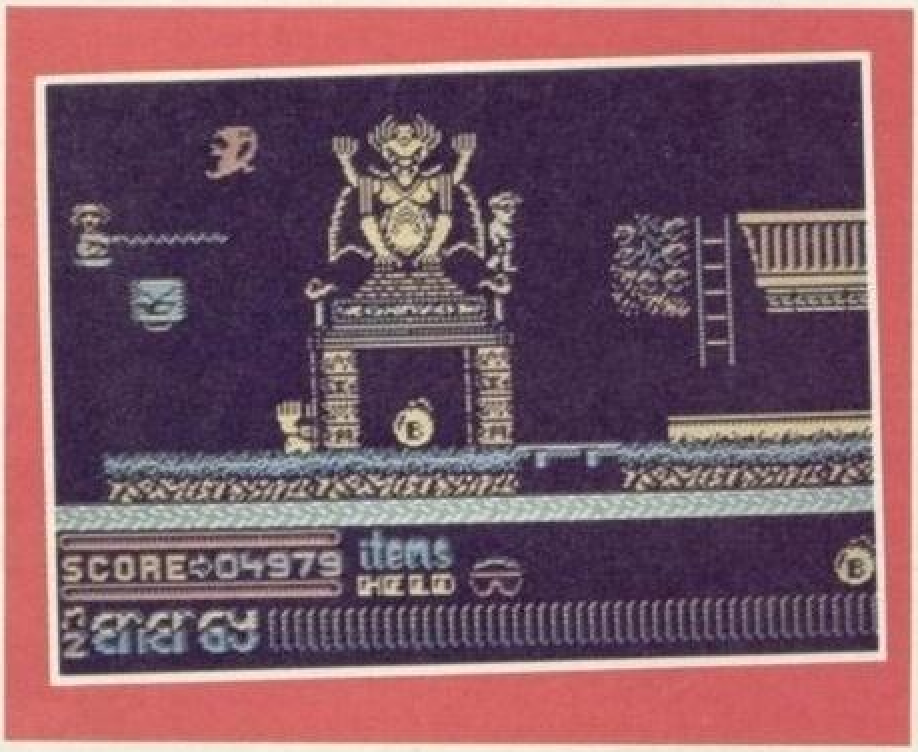
Mirrorsoft, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

The Isles of Arcanum — eight beautiful sandy islands somewhere in the Pacific. Beautiful that it is when viewed from a distance, moving in closer, however, you may find a sinister bespectacled figure buzzing around on his hovermobile. That mysterious figure is none other than the dastardly Dr Blitzen, villain of Dan's first adventure. Dr Blitzen is back with all his power and might, fully recovered after his first ordeal. The devious swine is out to take over the world yet again, and with everyone else brought to their knees it looks like another mission for *Dynamite Dan*.

Mass

CRITICISM

What makes DYNAMITE DAN II such a pleasure to play is its simple controls, you just wander round picking things up as you walk over them — and the bombs are automatically dropped and set off when you reach a door. As you explore the levels your energy obviously deteriorates, but there is just the right proportion of foodstuffs to nasties to sustain you for as long as you wish to wander. The graphics are very well defined and the animation of the characters is excellent. There are also nice little jingles when Dan picks up objects. I love the way he holds his arms out straight and plods along when he's hit by the hypnotising beam. DYNAMITE DAN II is sure to go down well with any games player.



The evil one has thought of a fiendish way to corrupt the minds of the world's population — he has manufactured records which have subliminal sound waves implanted in them. When they are listened to, the minds of pop fans are slowly eroded leaving them powerless to retaliate.

The ultimate objective of Dan's quest is to travel to Island Eight and locate Dr Blitzen's hideout. Once there he must go about shutting down the pressing plant where the mind-numbing singles are manufactured. However, the devious one has put a security password on the eight islands, and without these your quest is hopeless. Dan must travel to each of the islands that make up the Arcanum archipelago, and explore each fully in order to locate a record. When this record is played on the jukebox which each island conveniently houses, it will reveal part of the code. With the record happily playing on the jukebox, Dan returns to his famous airship, refuels and flies off to the next island.

The first island is constructed entirely of pipes and girders, somewhat resembling the Pompidu Centre in Paris. Dan leaps from girder to girder, climbing ladders that interlink the pipes in search of the elusive record and jukebox. As usual, nothing is quite as simple as it may seem. Dr Blitzen has engaged many a killer robot to act as your 'host' on the respective Islands. None of them move in a totally predictable fashion, and you can't guarantee their actions. Some may steal items that you have collected — nearly every item on the island has a specific purpose — others may simply get in the way, but whatever happens you can be sure that it makes your energy disappear. Dan has only one life, but there is one advantage in that he has an energy bar that can be topped up with the vast amounts of food on the Islands.

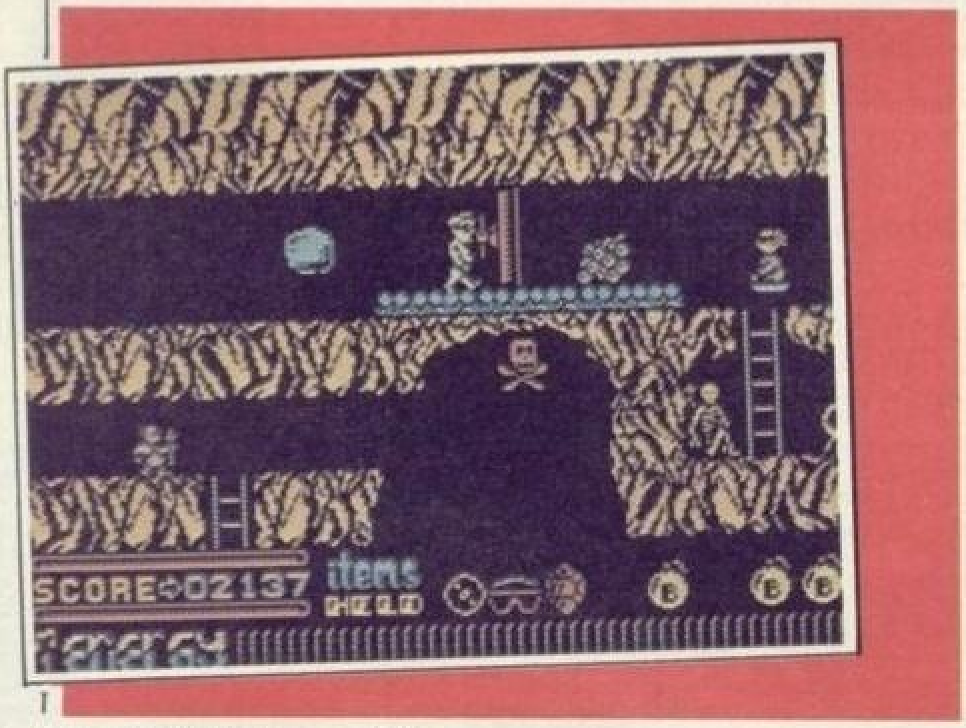
Richard

CRITICISM

I always thought that DYNAMITE DAN was far too difficult to be played to its full potential. However, DYNAMITE DAN II has got it just about right. Having sorted out what is needed where, you're well away and it won't be long before you're traversing many an island. My only gripe is the colour scheme — it seems a bit dull in the pastel shades. What happened to the garish colours of the original? DD II is far more than a simple exploration game — there's the right mixture of puzzles and action to make it incredibly playable. It will appeal to both the fans of the original, and even more to newcomers.

If you begin to do a bit well, then Dr Blitzen appears in his hovermobile and attempts to zap you. If caught, Dan is stunned and you lose control of him for some time. The occasional bomb, which can be found scattered around the islands, can prove very useful for blasting down locked security doors. Each island has its own secret passageway, but to access it you need a certain object. Without this, Dan falls to a watery grave in Davy Jones' Locker.

Once Dan has collected all eight fragments of the code it's time to plant a bomb at the pressing plant. Dan must then make a hasty retreat as the bomb goes off in about three minutes . . .



PRESENTATION 81%
Simple, uncluttered title screen.

GRAPHICS 86%
Extremely well defined no sparseness of colour.

SOUND 82%
Lots of jingles and the odd effect.

PLAYABILITY 88%
Once you've got the hand of it — excellent!

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 88%
Very compulsive right from the start.

VALUE FOR MONEY 85%
Well worth splashing out for.

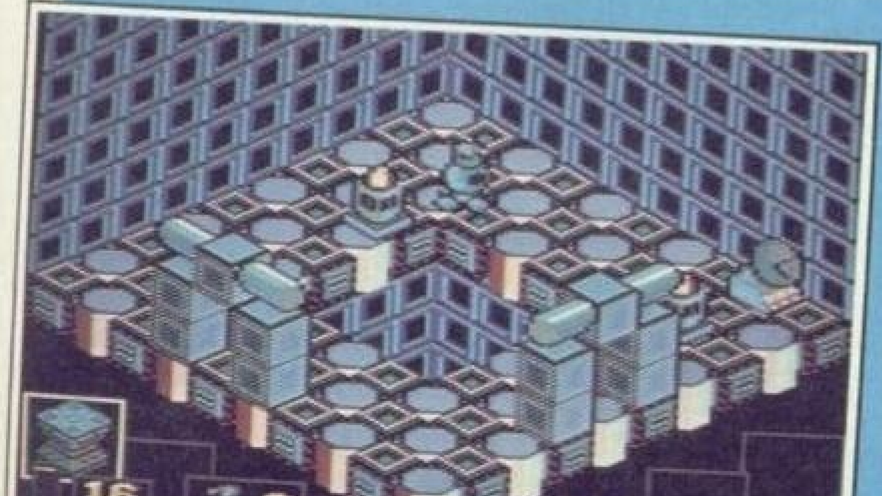
OVERALL 89%
A worthy and successful follow up to the original.

PALITRON

The Edge, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

Omicron Two Eridarii (triple code red) M-Class Star is not really the sort of place you'd go to for an inter-stellar holiday. The main reason for this is that the Palitron settlement, which covers most of the planet, is the most dire and unimpressive place in existence, even more so than Ludlow – we're talking boring with a capital ZZZ here. There's no sign of any form of biological life; not even any primeval slime coating the non-existent swamps. There is however, one reading that shows up on your planetary scanner – a dangerous one of high nastiness. There are several crystal-like formations within the city, and their presence is lethal to anything that might attempt to penetrate it. There's only one hope, and that is for you to take control of a Servo Class D27 robot, and search out the matter- destroying crystals which are scattered around the city.

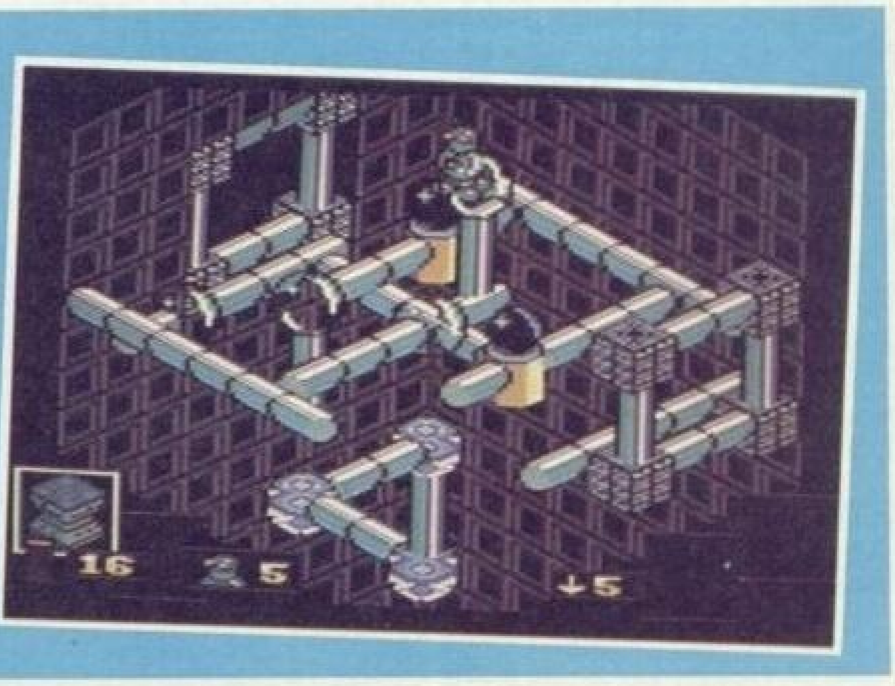
However, there are some rooms which dear old Servo finds difficult (or downright impossible) to access. To overcome this slight difficulty there's several Infraclass Mark Three (IMT) droids lurking in the rooms. Servo has no difficulty in spotting these IMT Pet Droids, as they resemble red mushrooms with spinning antennae protruding from their heads. To get one of these IMTs into operation, Servo has to locate a battery which is planted onto a large pile of disused canisters. Once plugged in, IMT's under your full control.



The complex of rooms is displayed in a brightly coloured 3D fashion, with the transition from room to room achieved by the flick-screen method. Servo takes the shape of several rotund cylinders with four protruding legs, he can trundle in any of the four standard directions, and with a bit of effort he can jump onto the necessary blocks.

When programming IMT to carry out your commands, there are a variety of orders you can give him, each of these works in a pseudo logo language. They are accessed via the joystick – moving it left and right to move the menu to the desired option, and then pressing 'copy' to select. They include move, right, left, take, drop, pause, jump and return; as well as the straight forward movements there are also options to actually edit and change the program.

The status display consists of several windows, four of which are storage compartments for your collected objects. Others are used to keep tally of your energy, the numbers of crystals destroyed and the number of galactic lives left. The rooms often house disused objects such as the all essential batteries, bombs (which begin their countdown to the big bang when dropped) and the occasional sprinkling of transporter pads. Having cleared up the complex you can rest assured, safe in the knowledge that people can now flock to Omicron Two Eridarii (Triple code red) M-Class Star for their hols.



Richard

CRITICISM

PALITRON had been sitting on my desk for several days, I had taken a quick look it and thought it complicated in the extreme. However, as is often the case, after studying the instructions carefully I began to see where everything fitted into place. In truth PALITRON is a very good puzzle adventure, it's not too difficult either. Unlike so many adventures, PALITRON's puzzles are laid out in a logical manner; the objects that are found in one room are more often than not used in another close by. The graphics are very good, well thought out and defined. The only let down is the near absence of sound. Never mind though, it's still a very enjoyable game.

anthony

CRITICISM

What at first seems like just another 3D runabout turns out to be quite a nifty game. The idea of just running around screens, collecting things and solving puzzles is not new, but the novel way you can program a little pet droid to do some of the dirty work for you is a added twist. Most of the attacking obstacles that you come across simply take energy from you rather than kill you outright. Although the game does slow down slightly when you enter a screen with a lot happening, it is still fast enough to stop any frustrations. The animation and movement of the main character is very good, with some of the smoothest graphics seen on the Amstrad. The graphics are very colourful and add depth to the game. Overall, PALITRON is a better than average 3D chase that should appeal all those who like this genre of game.

Mass

CRITICISM

After forcing myself to get started in playing what I expected to be yet another boring 3D game I found I got quite taken in with the overall feel of PALITRON. I was well impressed by the very nice colourful graphics, the overall layout of the screens and most of all the the very smooth and quick movements of the main character – usually I find 3D games too slow and monotonous. The puzzles had just the right amount of difficulty to keep even me interested and dare I say wanting more. Everything is set out, as Dicky says, very logically and the pet droids are simple to program. A rather pleasant and most enjoyable game.

PRESENTATION 86%
Good practice and training modes.

GRAPHICS 88%
Large colourful characters.

SOUND 29%
Nothing special but helpful.

PLAYABILITY 75%
A bit difficult to get into, but generally good.

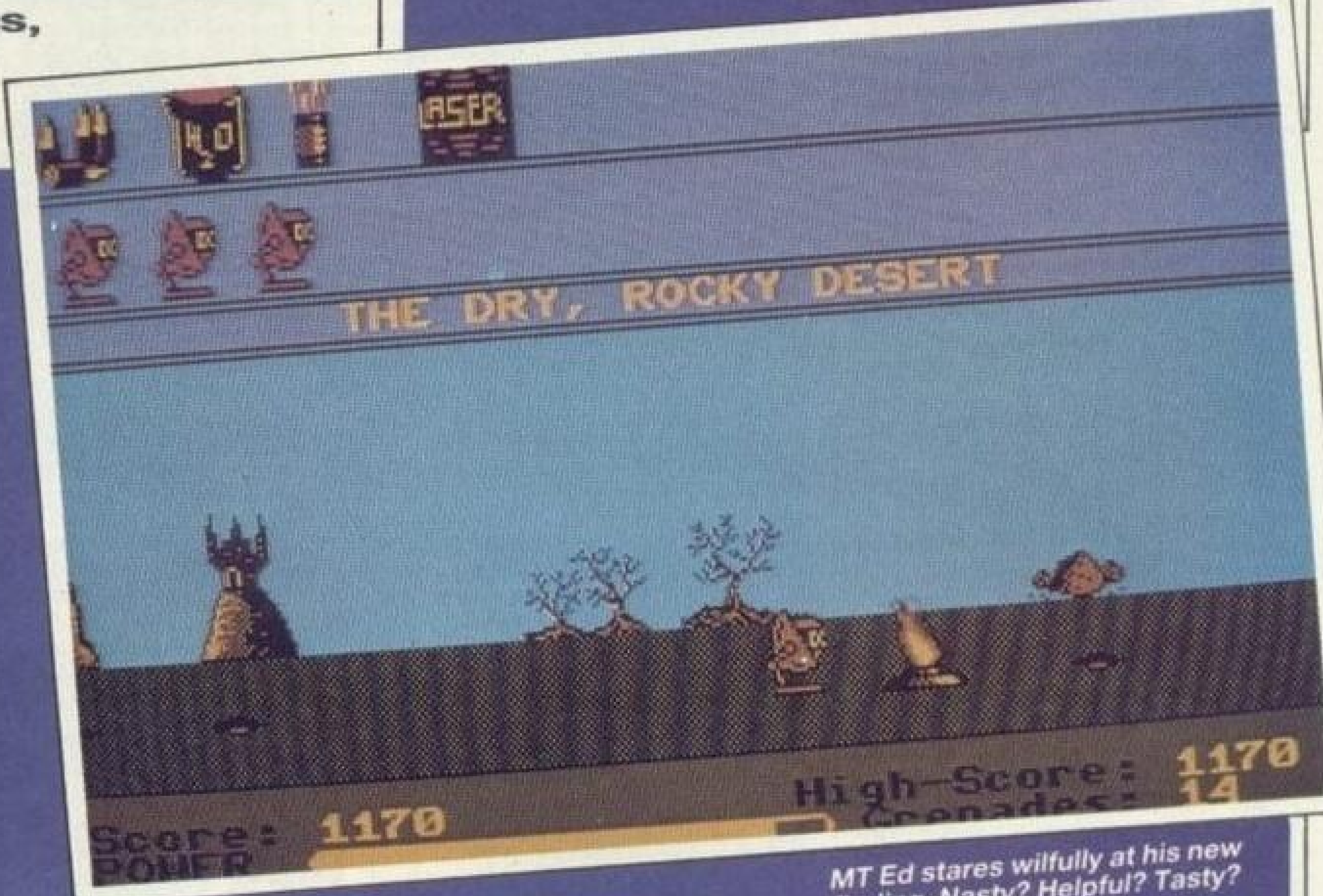
ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 78%
Plenty of puzzles to keep you up into the early hours.

VALUE FOR MONEY 80%
Plenty of puzzling for your pennies.

OVERALL 79%
A good puzzling adventure that should have a great deal of appeal.

KAT TRAP

Streetwise, £7.95 cass, joystick or keys



MT Ed stares wilfully at his new finding. Nasty? Helpful? Tasty? Hummm . . .

Way back last summer our sister magazine, CRASH, ran a competition to write a game. After sorting through nearly 4000 entries the powers-that-be at CRASH, **Domark** and **Design Design** came up with Jon Eggleton's design for an ingenious little concept which he laughingly called Kat Trap. After many months of product development the game is with us and stars Jon's original wacky robot, MT-Ed.

Paul

CRITICISM

At first, KAT TRAP looks like a very plain and uninteresting game. But it doesn't take long to get into the game and realise that there is more to it than meets the eye. The graphics are very well drawn and the colour has been used to its full effect. Sound effects are good, but the game lacks a nice little ditty that would give more atmosphere to it. The game features lots of little effects that have to be used to the full; like hitting one ball to get catapulted over another. KAT TRAP is very playable and lots of fun. Domark have come up with an immediately addictive and reasonably priced game.

The people of the twenty fourth century are still getting over a mammoth war that happened over two hundred years ago. The Earth was wrecked by a Solar explosion and the inhabitants were decimated, apart from a brave few who survived and rapidly escaped in the New Ark. After many centuries of travelling through the uncharted backwaters of space they have finally returned to earth not only to find it habitable but in fact inhabited by the hideous Cat men! The Cat men's own planet was made a nuclear wasteland in their own vicious war, and they flew to Earth hoping to begin their race again. Obviously the Earthlings weren't too happy about this and commenced a vicious war against them. They were, sadly, beaten and lost all frontal attack fighters and are now planning a minimalist attack on the Cat men.

Richard

CRITICISM

So Domark launch their new label on the Amstrad with KAT TRAP; if this is the standard that they're going for then it bodes well for the future. The game is nothing miraculous, it's just a lot of good ideas all put together in one game and executed very well. The only let down is the sound which consists of very little but mediocre bleeps and burps. Never mind though, the game is such great fun to play; and the emphasis is on fun. What appealed to me is the way that it's not just a trundle along and shoot things game. Instead it's got that little bit extra in the way of various enemies that have to killed in different ways. It's hard to pin point the various good bits, it just works extremely well as a whole game.

MT -Ed is going to lead this frontal attack – his mission: to obliterate the Cat men's computer. The Cat men have unleashed mutant beings from the time of the solar explosions such as fire-beings, Icemen, Shadowmen and sewer beasts. All of them are out to defeat poor old MT Ed.

The first part of the action takes place along the planet surface, speeding over various terrains such as the spaceport, the charred forest and the lake. At each location various kinds of nasties reside and these must all be killed if you want to proceed. MT -Ed starts off with his standard Kat killer gun but as he progresses other ammunition can be found which is needed to kill the Cat-men's allies.

For example in the charred forest MT -Ed will come up against the fire Demons. To avoid these killing him off a canister of water needs to be collected. Any ammo collected, and there are several different kinds, are displayed in the storage window at the top of the screen. Changing the weapon is achieved by pressing the enter key or space bar; to fire MT-Ed will have to be travelling either left or right, else one of his grenades will be launched from the top of his head.

When MT-Ed has penetrated the defences of the Cat-men and reached the battle computer he will find a death-grid, a device set up to protect Cat-men's computer. He can only deactivate the death grid by shorting the pulses of electrical energy moving around the grid. To do this you must position a remote device on top of the grid, controlled by left and right, and select a switch on the side of the grid, controlled by up and down. Two bursts of anti-matter will then be released by pressing fire. If, where the two bursts meet, there is a pulse then an electrical pulse will be destroyed. Fifteen pulses must be destroyed within one minute or MT-Ed will fail in his mission. And we know what will happen then . . . Meeow!

Mass

CRITICISM

When Design Design took Jon Eggleton's idea for a game they added a little spice to what were already very pretty drawings and created what is graphically a very visual game. It's therefore a shame that any real interest doesn't come in KAT TRAP until the sixth screen. It's a shame that with such a good presentation the graphics are let down by the shallowness of the plot.

PRESENTATION 89%
Very slick, good selections but to high score table.

GRAPHICS 90%
Simplistic, but work very well indeed.

SOUND 56%
Nothing special.

PLAYABILITY 87%
Initially tricky but can get easier.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 79%
Compulsive to get to the end of each level.

VALUE FOR MONEY 84%
A fair price – for once!

OVERALL 84%
A great little game that'll have a lot of a appeal.

ELEKTRA GLIDE

English Software, £8.95 cass, joystick only

Dressed in protective leathers and putting on your helmet the adrenalin starts pumping as you await the start of the race. Your machine — *Elektra Glide* — the most advanced hi-performance super bike to date.

In *Elektra Glide* you have no opponents, the race is against time. The object of the game is simple — all the player must do is negotiate his way round the track before the alotted time runs out. If he succeeds in making his way round to the starting point then an extra time bonus is awarded to tackle the next course. There is no interval between tracks so once the game commences there is no stopping.

On load you are given the choice of three steering control envelopes in the form of graphs. Each of these has a different control sensitivity thus catering for different types of joystick. You also have the choice of three courses: England, Australia and America each increasing in difficulty.

You start off in a tunnel with a somewhat darkened view of the road ahead — no scenery — just the road. The bottom of the screen is taken up by the instrumentation panel showing the time, points and your speed. There are automatic brakes on the bike so the control on the joystick is simple. Push forward to accelerate, let go to slow down and left and right to steer.

Shooting out of the tunnel and into the daylight, apart from the odd tree, you encounter the barren landscape with hills and mountains scrolling along on the horizon as you rip around the bends.

Although there are no other vehicles to contend with the race is made perilous, in the way of obstacles, which take the forms of 3D cubes and spheres. These make their way along the track and attempt to home in on your craft. They must be avoided at all costs for collision with one results in your bike being stopped dead, thus losing precious time. Occasionally you will hear the roar of engines as a jet shoots overhead and further along the road deposits ''electrostatic columns'' on the track. These also must be avoided as collision with these has much the same effect. Mind you also avoid the pools of water on the track as they will send you skidding off the road. Leaving the road will slow you down considerably, so precise driving is required.

So lads — On Ya' Bikes and away you go!

Richard

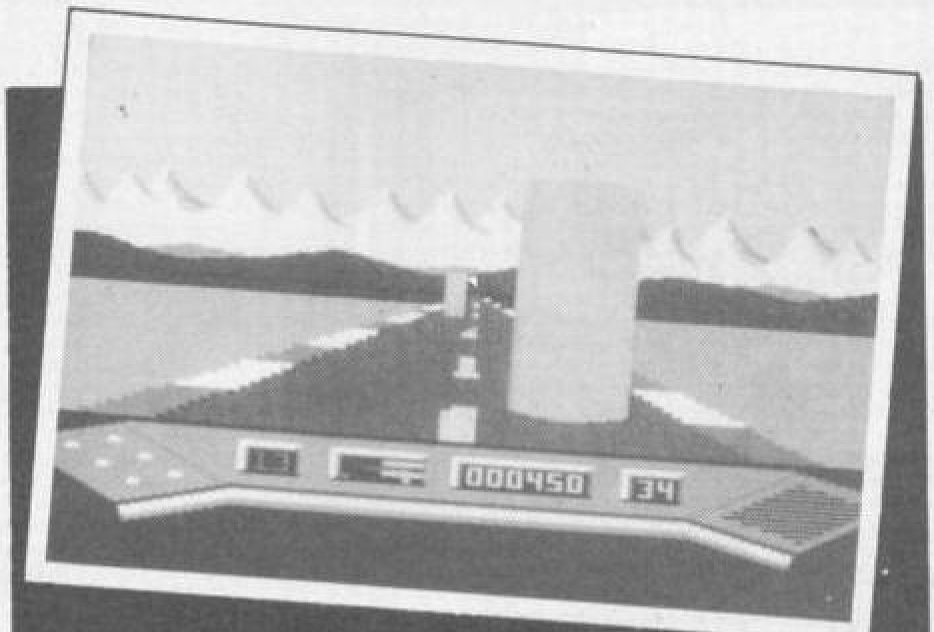
CRITICISM

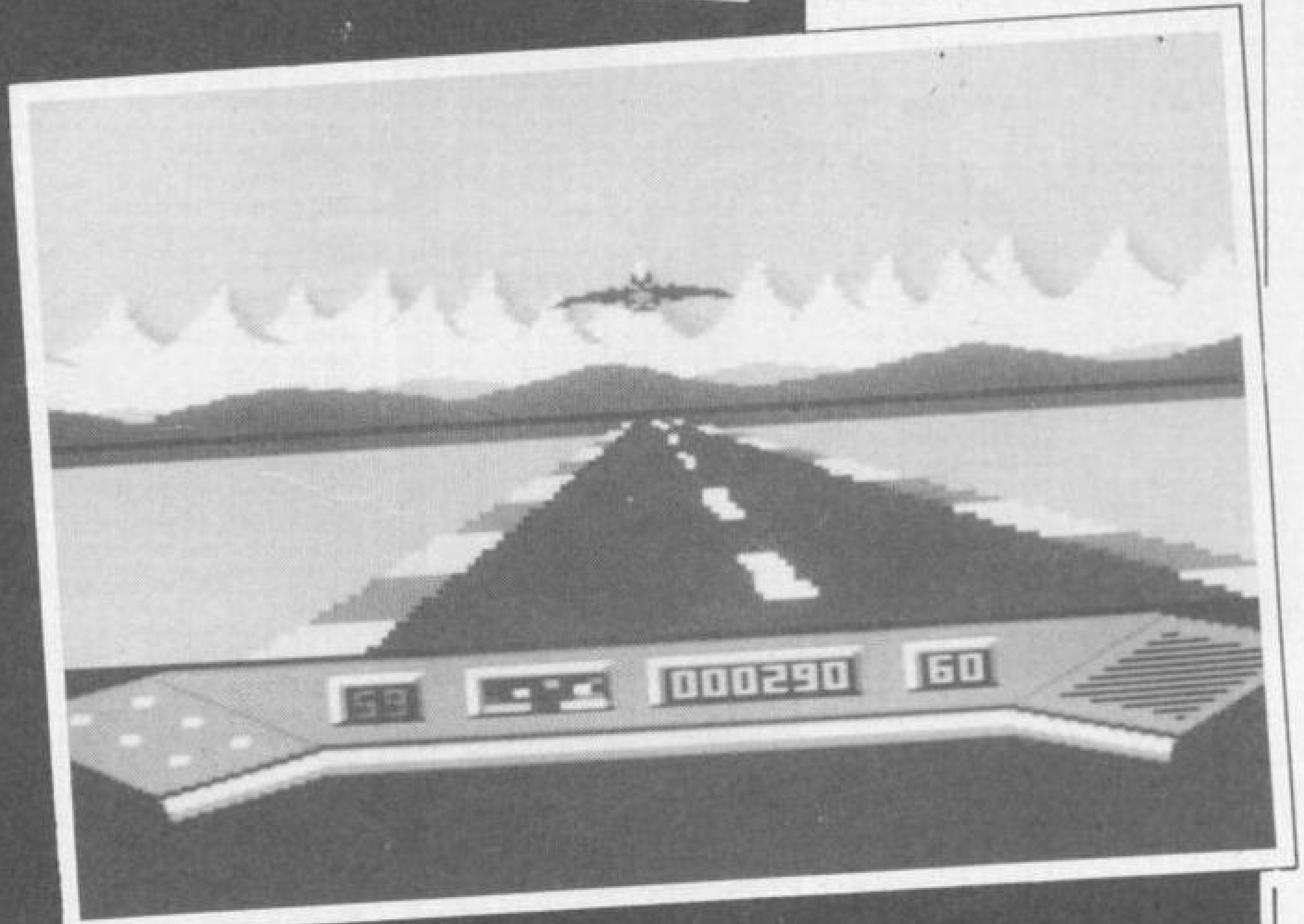
When I first saw this I thought that it looked quite exciting, that was until I sat down and played (?) it. Although it looks pretty effective from a distance you really don't realise how poor it can be until you're actually in front of it with joystick firmly in hand. The most annoying aspect to it is the fact that every thing moves nice 'n' smoothly until something else appears on the screen, then it looks more like riding a 'Bone Shaker.' On the good side the tunnel scene is probably the best bit of it all but that's about it. I'm thoroughly bored with average racing games and this does little else to please me.

Mass

CRITICISM

Let's do a race simulation — Yeah! Let's have one rider only — Yeah! Let's put objects in the road — Yeah! — BORING — After going round the track a few times, dodging the same boring objects, the game gets rather, well, boring. The lack of other riders is in no way made up by the various objects that you meet along the way. Nice idea though. For me it ceased to be a race after a matter of minutes and more of an endless drive. The lack of scenery doesn't help either. There simply wasn't enough to look at or do to keep me interested.





PRESENTATION 72%
Steering control envelopes — great idea!

GRAPHICS 50%
Basic but functional.

SOUND 55%
Tune all the way through, reasonable effects.

PLAYABILITY 45%
Just . . .

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 37%
Limited to start — tends to lead to terminal boredom.

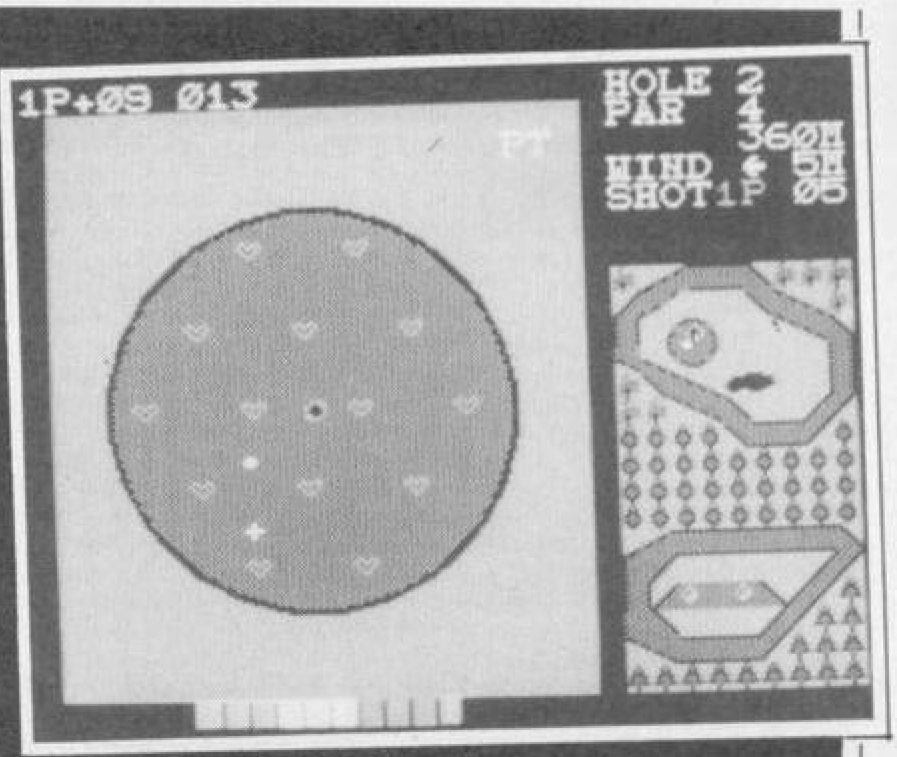
VALUE FOR MONEY 39%
Not enough to justify the price.

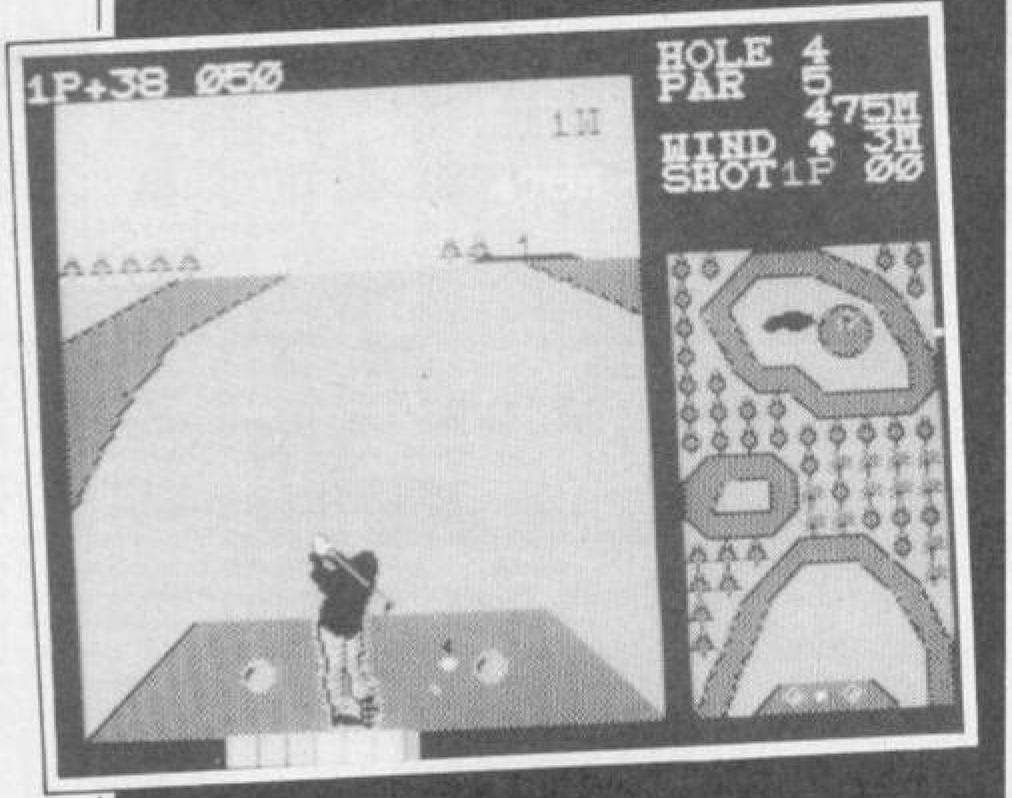
OVERALL 41%
Nothing racey in this game.

KONAMI'S GOLF

Imagine,
£8.95 cass,
joystick or keys

What a lovely afternoon this has turned out to be. There's a slight wind, blue sky, and quite warm. It's absolutely super for a quick round. The golfers are now coming onto the course, look what a great pair of tartan slacks — and that Pringle jumper. I think I can say this is going to be a great day's play..





So begins the first round of a somewhat unusual Konami conversion which is away from the action and plumps, instead, for a relaxing game of golf. The actual game can be played by one or two players playing either a stroke game or a match game. Stroke play is probably the best for novices as the scoring system is based on the total number of strokes taken to complete the nine hole golf course. In match play each hole is contested separately; the first player to win five holes is the winner of the game.

The action screen is split into three segments, the largest of the three is a view of the golfer looking down the course towards the hole. On the right there is the bird's eye view of the shots and which encapsulates the entire course, and above that is the information window. This keeps track of the hole number, the wind power, wind direction, the par of the hole, and your shot number. The first decision that will face your Pringle-clothed golfer is the style of shot — there are three options: Hook will make the ball swing to the left; slice will take it to the right and straight . . . Oh, work it out for yourselves!

Mass

CRITICISM

Although the graphics aren't up to much this is a really accurate golf simulation. The instructions are very well presented, giving the first time golfer good indication of the distance the various clubs can reach. On the actual playing, you have wind indication, and a nice variation of shots. Once a stroke is played it will even tell you the distance left to the hole. It makes a very welcome change from all action games — nice n' civilized.

The next part of setting up the shot is to select the desired club. This is achieved by pushing the joystick either up or down. The choice ranges from a one to nine iron, a one or two wood, a pitching wedge, a sandwedge and a putter which can only be used on the green. Having chosen a club the power of the shot must be decided upon. This is where a bit of skill and judgment comes into play as a moving horizontal bar swings back and forth. If you hit fire when the bar is at its longest, the power will be high, and likewise if it is at its lowest the power will be least. Watch and observe the path of the ball on the overhead window and then it's time to begin the process all over again. After you have played the nine holes it is back off to the club house for a quick gin and tonic — on the rocks of course.

Anthony

CRITICISM

I am afraid that GOLF is just another of those games that uses the name already made by Imagine to get sold. Although it is more like a golf simulation than NICK FALDO'S OPEN it is neither as playable nor as enjoyable in my opinion. The club selection for each shot is not logical either, they seem to have numbered the clubs using their own system. Overall, a game that could be passed up for reading the A-Z street map of Ludlow.

Richard

CRITICISM

This is quite an unusual offering from Konami — a golf simulation. Nevertheless, it's a good one. Well, the best Golf could be in mode 1. There's no fast action, just a nice sedate game with quite a bit of thought involved. Most of the time you'll spend planning the shots and deciding the next move but I think it's worth it in the end. If you fancy something a little bit different then GOLF could well be worth taking a look at.

PRESENTATION 78%
Considering the amount of info on the screen it's good.

GRAPHICS 65%
Good enough to serve their purpose.

SOUND 12%
Blip, bop.

PLAYABILITY 79%
Easy enough to get to grips with it.

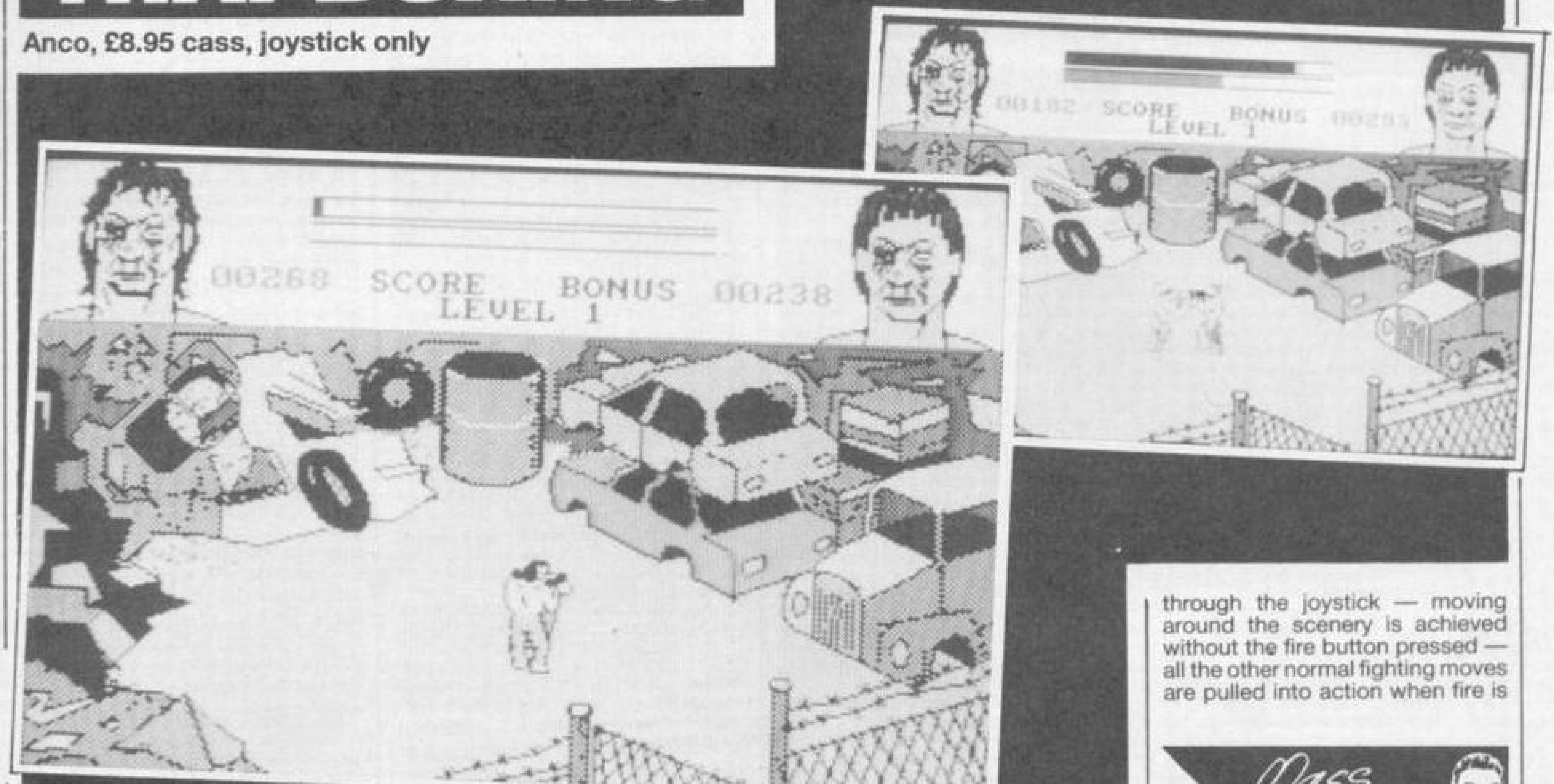
ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 55%
Little variety to keep you playing.

VALUE FOR MONEY 67%
Maybe a bit expensive for what it offers.

OVERALL 65%
Maybe it would be better to wait for Leader Board.

THAI BOXING

Anco, £8.95 cass, joystick only



No rules, no rituals, no constraints, just pure unadulterated violence. *Thai Boxing* is the spectator sport with one simple objective, to inflict as much pain as possible in the shortest amount of time. Before you can enter the ring your boxer will have to work his way up from the underground circuit. The first match has been placed in a disused corner of a scrapyard. Your opponent, Angry 'arry, has been well trained in the art of Thai and is ready for your challenge.

As you battle it out you will have to engage in fight with eight opponents of varying agility — meeting two opponents per backdrop. The screen is split between a status window and the action window. In the action window the fighting takes place amid the pseudo 3D backdrop. Meanwhile, up above this is a display of both you and your opponent's energy level. These are represented by two bars, one red and one black — your obvious objective is to maintain your energy while depleting that of your opponent. If the bars aren't graphical enough for you then there's a depiction of both players faces. The more blows the face receives the more blood, cuts and bruises will appear and when your bout is over you look a right sorry state.

All movements are accessed through the joystick — moving around the scenery is achieved without the fire button pressed — all the other normal fighting moves are pulled into action when fire is held down. Each time a new opponent is met he will be more difficult to fight off than the last, but then it is tough at the top!

Richard

CRITICISM

I've just about had it up to (waving hand somewhere above head) here with fighting games that have little new to offer. The problem with THAI BOXING is that the actual characters are far too small when compared to the size of the playing area. It would appear that more emphasis has been placed on the pretty graphics rather on the playability. It also appears extremely difficult to actually get to grips with the way to win, I never seemed to get anywhere except thoroughly beaten up. Oh well, bang goes another beat 'em up.

Anthony

CRITICISM

Definitely one of the most boring pieces of rubbish ever to hit the market. For the first few games I found myself being killed rather a lot but once I found "THE" move then it was all over for the computer. The idea of different backgrounds is quite a good one, and indeed the backdrops, are very well put together in four colour mode, but the game is still boring to both play and watch. Let's hope a decent game soon comes out on the THAI BOXING theme, which has quite a scope.

Mass

CRITICISM

The graphics are very nice, the scenery is colourful and detailed, but the playability leaves a lot to be desired. The characters, although reasonably animated, seemed to be overwhelmed by their surroundings — it makes them look insignificant. The joystick controls are rather slow to react and the moves are hard to judge. The touches I did like were the two faces of the fighters and the blood and brushes appearing after every blow. Otherwise unimpressive to say the least.

PRESENTATION 79%
Interesting effects.

GRAPHICS 65%
Reasonable attempt . . .

SOUND 62%
Funny tune plays on title screen.

PLAYABILITY 50%
A bit difficult for your average gamesplayer.

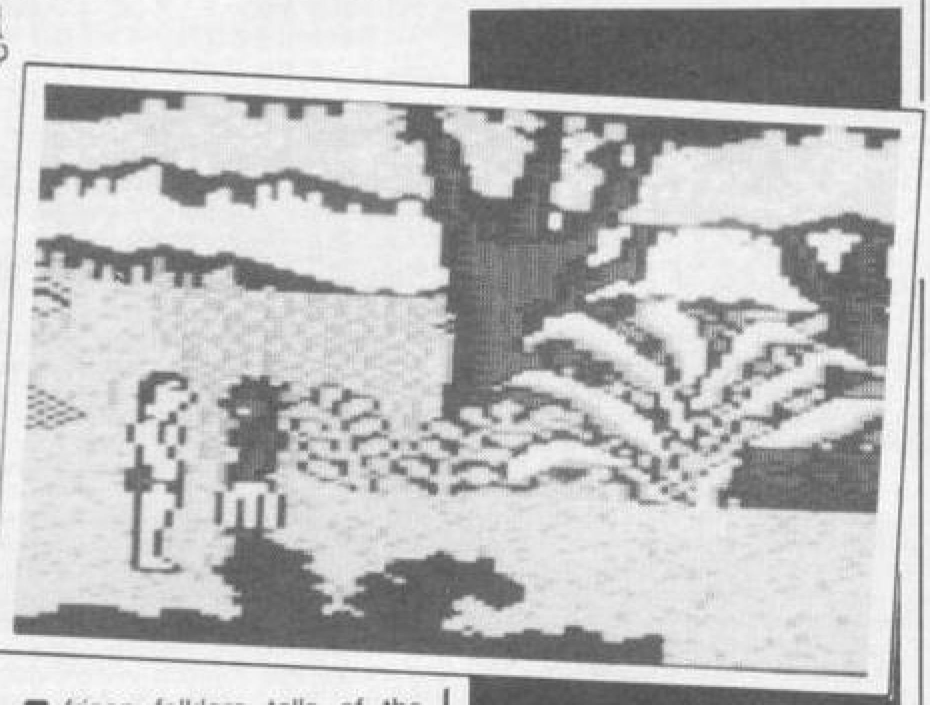
ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 47%
Little excitement leads to terminal tedium.

VALUE FOR MONEY 51%
A bit pricey for such a meagre game.

OVERALL 58%
Might prove interesting but not much.

TARZAN

Martech, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys



African folklore tells of the exploits of a legendary figure who was half man half ape – Tarzan. Abandoned in the forest at an early age he was brought up by Kala, a kindly she-ape, and he grew to learn the ways of the jungle and the language of the beasts. Years later he claimed the inheritance which was rightfully his, as John Clayton – Lord of Greystoke, Peer of the Realm. However, if ever the need arises for him to return to the wild he can cast off the chains that restrict him as a polished English gentleman, and become ruler of his true kingdom – the jungle.

That occasion has arisen, he has accepted the call back to the wild. Lady Jane Greystoke (she who stays in the tree-house cooking his casseroles) is in mortal danger. Held captive by Usanga, chief of the Wamabo, she is to be fed to the devouring mouth of Sheeta the Panther. That is unless Tarzan retrieves the seven gemstones which have been stolen from the tribal shrine. The seven gemstones are believed to be the Eyes of the Rainbow, one for each colour of the spectrum. In the rage of his loss, Usanga has given Tarzan only three days in which to find them, otherwise Jane will become a sacrificial take-away.

Scrounging information from every creature in his kingdom, Tarzan finally discovers that the Eyes of the Rainbow have been scattered around the dense jungle by a tribe of pesky chimps.

The game itself takes the form of a flick screen arcade adventure with several beat em up sequences thrown in for good measure. On his many travels Tarzan encounters different scenarios, such as dark caves that remain dark unless you have collected a torch. The caves form a hazardous maze that is filled with poisonous spiders and unearthly flames. He must also traverse swampy morasses and the treacherous quicksand where he may encounter Numa the lion and Hitash the snake. Dangers don't only come in animal form, they also come in the shape of headhunters who attack with poisoned spears and white hunters with their rifles.

Time is your greatest enemy – with only three days in which to save Jane you're going to have to be nippy on your feet. As time passes, the jungle turns from night to day. The length of actual game-time that it takes for three days to pass depends on how successfully Tarzan can overcome or avoid the various perils he may encounter. For example, if Tarzan is stung by a spider a period of time passes – therefore, if Tarzan is careless the three days can pass extremely quickly. Not to be outdone, Tarzan has a number of skills which he may put to use including; jumping in every direction, somersaulting, high and low punching and picking up objects such as the gemstones. Tarzan, in traditional style, can also swing on vines providing he has collected a rope, and he really doesn't have time to splash about in rivers with only three days to save Jane from those ravenous jaws. Grrrr . . .

Richard

CRITICISM

It seems a very difficult project – turning such a screen Legend into a computer game. But you'll be pleased to hear that Martech have made a rather good job of it – in fact, TARZAN is a very slick product. The view of the action is a very interesting one – almost as viewed from the middle ground with the silhouettes of the plants in the back obscuring a certain amount of vision. Despite this appearing odd, it does add to the atmosphere substantially. The tune which accompanies the action is a 'boppy' arrangement of the original theme music, and more than makes up for the lack of biffin' 'n' bashing noises. A superb action game that I like a great deal – if it wasn't for them damned spiders . . .

Anthony

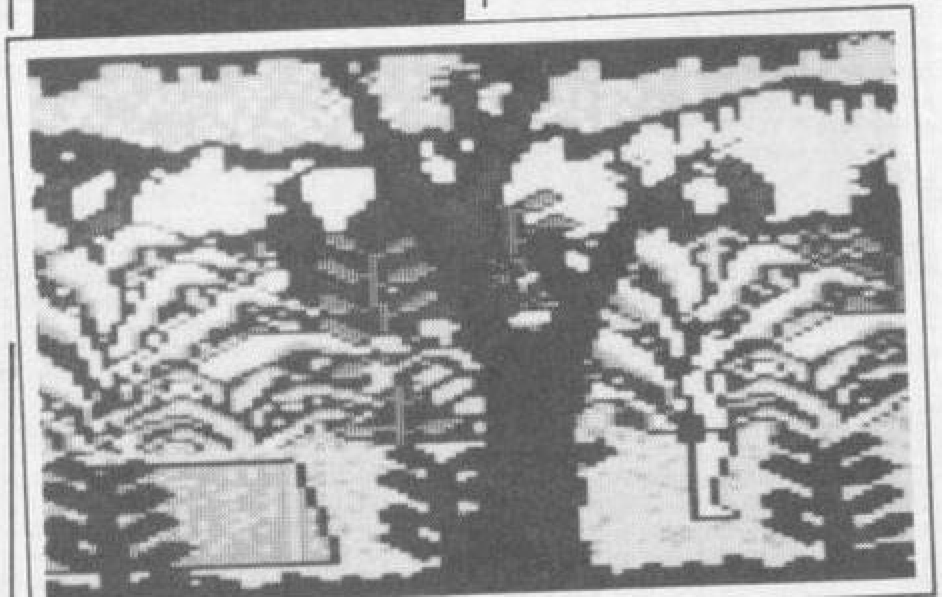
CRITICISM

TARZAN is one of the best Arcade Adventures that I have come across. There is little to fault it on, except maybe there can be too many attackers on screen at one time. The pits that are dotted around the jungle are great for getting rid of panthers, they just fall straight down, their legs flailing. The hardest part of the game I have met so far is the rope across a pit which you must jump onto and swing across. Most times I just end up in the pit, logically the pile of bodies down there should get so big that I could just walk across the pit, but it was not to be. A great game that should keep arcade adventurers going for quite a while.

Mass

CRITICISM

TARZAN is a great combination of slick screening and arcade action pitting your wits with the common all garden giant spiders and the like. I found getting past the spiders, as well as the swinging rope, to be one of the more difficult feats to get used to. Punching has to be rather precise action as every time you do so you nudge forward resulting in good 'ol spidy getting his din dins. The graphics are of a very high standard with the scenery being very detailed and colourful. The game is made very atmospheric with the help of a catchy tune that plays all the way through. TARZAN, I'm sure, will appeal to all arcade game fans as it did to me – AAAHHHH AAHHHHH AAAAHHH!!



PRESENTATION 82%
Well packaged, but let down by no score display.

GRAPHICS 89%
All nice 'n' green and flourishing.

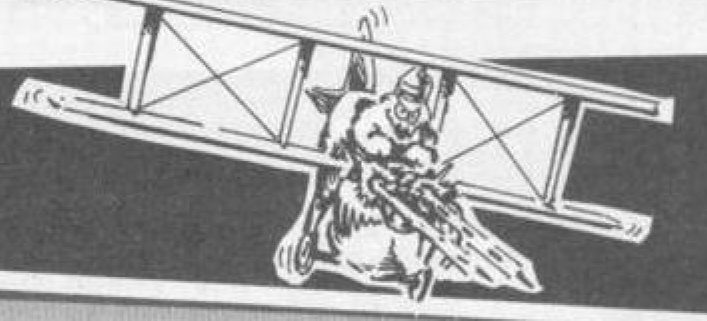
SOUND 90%
Great theme tune that plays throughout.

PLAYABILITY 88%
You'll have to be quick with your responses.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 82%
Lots and lots of forest to explore.

VALUE FOR MONEY 80%
Almost worth it for the amount of content.

OVERALL 85%
One of Martech's better licences.



DEEP STRIKE

Durell, £9.95 cass and disk (through Durell Mail Order only), joystick and keys

Mick Wilson has been working for DURELL for about two years now, and in this time he has been responsible for many of the Amstrad conversions. His first 'all my own work' original program is now all finished and ready to take to the skies in the form of *Deep Strike*.

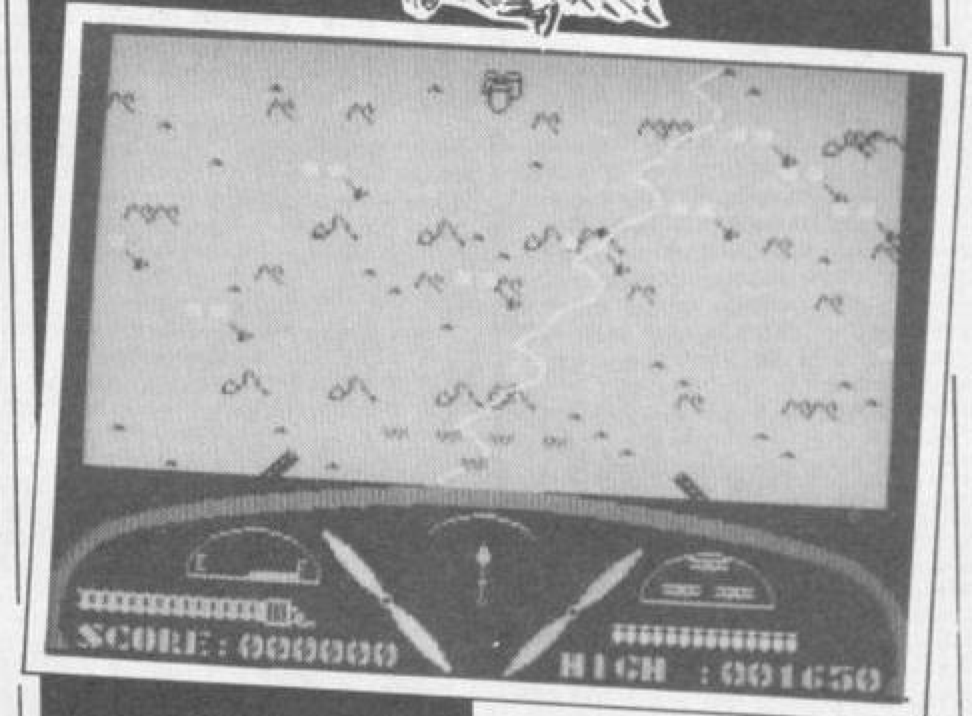
There is nothing quite like a commission in the Royal Air Corps, sitting back in a comfy chair sipping a nicely cooled Pimms. Ah yes, this is the life. Of course there is the odd bombing mission deep into enemy territory to be carried out, and suddenly us fighter pilots are off to try to protect the poor helpless bomber pilots.

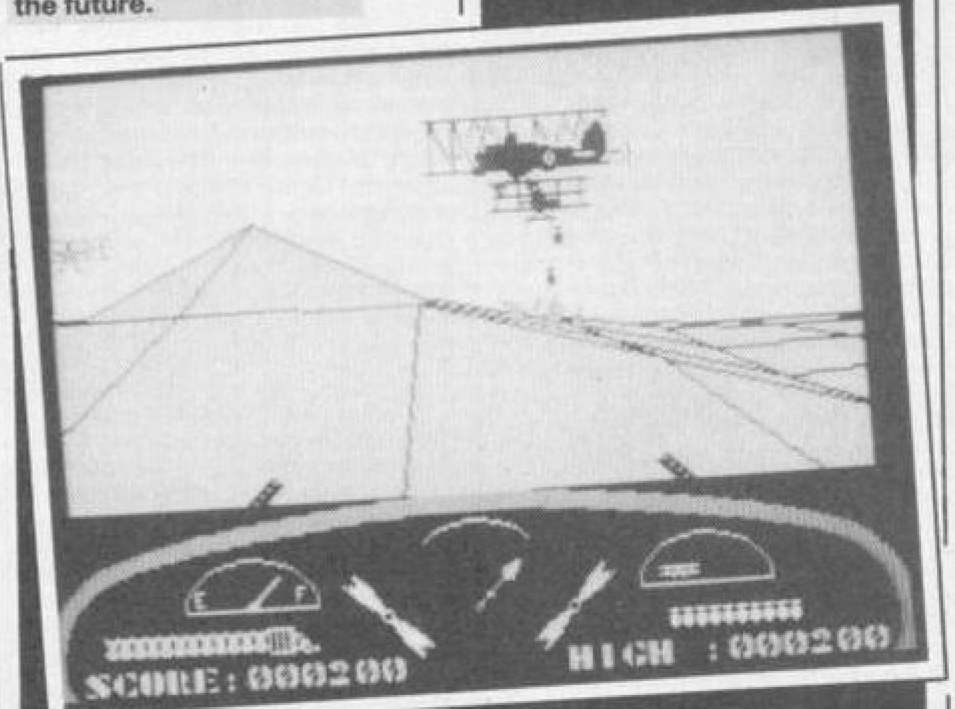
Battlefield Germany is the scene, and a formation of bombers, with fighter escort, must get past red enemy ground forces and fighters who are all out to bring a speedy end to the mission. Play begins with the player taking off from the airfield on the long journey to his objective. There are three bombers that loosely follow the moves of the player's fighter. The bombers always get in front of our hero who must protect them from the lead of the enemy fighters and steer them clear of the anti aircraft forces on the ground.

Enemy ground forces can be bombed by using the space bar to rain death upon their heads. The number of bombs remaining being shown in the cockpit view of the fighter, along with how much ammo the fighter has left. If the fighter uses its machine guns a little too excessively, then the gunbelt will turn red as it overheats and starts to let the pilot down in the heat of a dogfight.

Enemy fighters attack the bombers as their priority target, after all they don't want large parts of their homeland bombed to blazes, but if all the bombers are destroyed then bad luck old bean! – they're going to be going for you. Any damage that is sustained by the fighter is shown by the length of the propeller on the left, with the propeller on the right giving an indication of how airworthy the particular bomber in front is.

A map is displayed of the territory ahead, highlighting any high ground which must be skirted to avoid scraping the underside of the plane and damaging it yet more. Whilst the player casts an oily eye over the map, the game is paused, so that those quick trips to the kitchen can be made for yet another glass of Pimms and lemonade without coming back to find the aeroplane in a ball of flames.





Anthony

CRITICISM

It's one of those games where at first sight it looks impressive but boring, but after a few games I really got into it. The way you can bomb the ground features (especially the churches) makes the game much more enjoyable than if you just had to shoot planes. I found the game a little hard in the earlier sections and died quite a few times. The greatest skill required is keeping the enemy in your sights while avoiding shooting at your own bomber and keeping on course for the enemy base, no mean feat. Overall a game that you should come back to quite a lot in the future.

Mass

CRITICISM

DEEP STRIKE is a very novel way of controlling two planes, with you shooting down aircraft from your cockpit while bombing ground bases from the plane in front. Although very ingenious it becomes very difficult (and dare I say hectic) to protect both yourself and your bomber from air attack, while at the same time bombing buildings below. In the later stages it became rather inevitable that I had to sacrifice the bombers in order to get any further – there was no way I could find to protect both. The graphics are very nice, but the sound FX are poor. A great idea but a shame that the playability consequently seems to suffer.

Richard

CRITICISM

Initially this game is quite compelling, flying over the landscape bombing innoccent hamlets – great stuff. However, this enjoyment is not very consistent as the game play soon becomes very tedious with little action to keep you glued to your screen. Having a bomber in front of you is quite annoying, because if you fail to remember that he's one of yours then Kaaabooom! and Mr Bomber will be no longer. However, although this didn't necessarily appeal to me, it might to others – take a look first though.

PRESENTATION 75%
Good – on instructions and score table.

GRAPHICS 84%
Simplistic, but suitable.

SOUND 63%
Boom. Neeeeeow!

PLAYABILITY 79%
A bit of practice will work wonders!

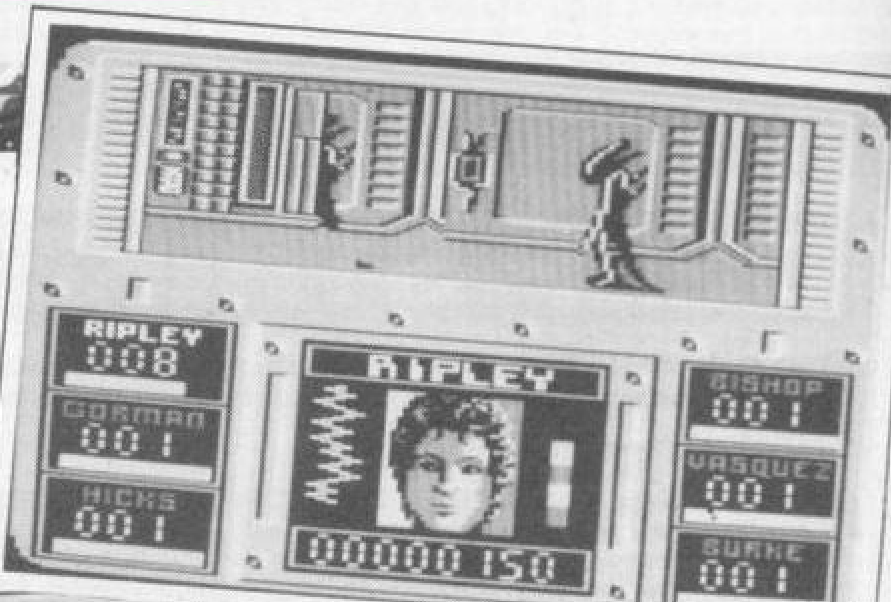
ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 79%
May hook you if combat appeals to you.

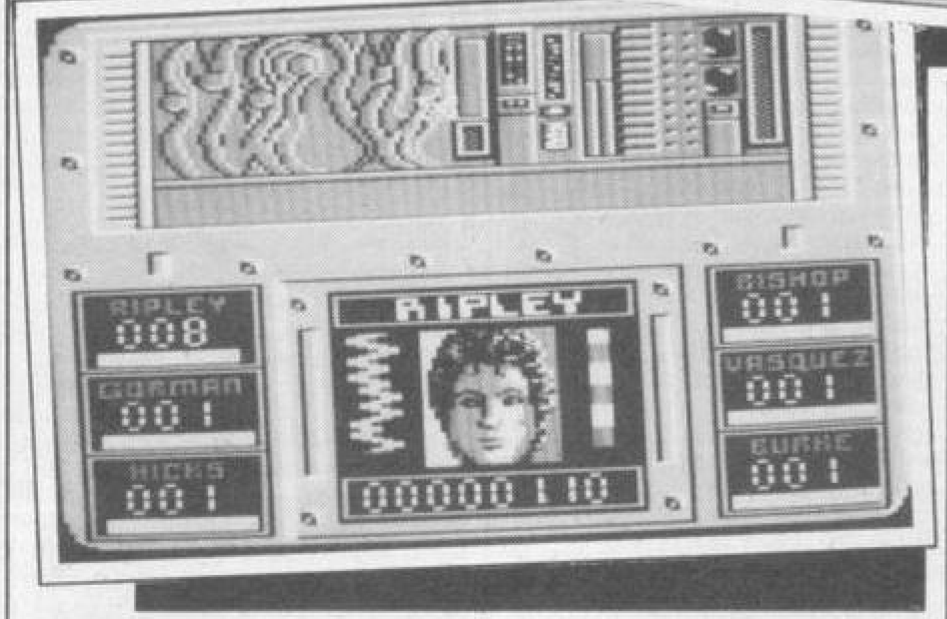
VALUE FOR MONEY 68%
Not bad – considering the disk version costs the same on mail order.

OVERALL 71%
An above average combat game.

ALIENS

Electric Dreams, £9.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick and keys





Warrant Officer Ripley, the sole survivor of the ill-fated star freighter Mostromo, is picked up in deep space in a hyper-sleep capsule and returned to a space station orbiting Earth. There she is interrogated by a hostile committee of the top Company administrators. Her account of alien creatures that gestate inside human bodies is disbelieved and her warnings of an alien space craft containing thousands of unhatched eggs are ignored. She then learns that the very same planet, where the crew of the Nostromo encountered the creatures, is now inhabited by the Company's engineers and their families. When all contact is lost with the colony, Ripley reluctantly agrees to accompany an elite squad of Space Marines to the distant planet. On arrival they find an eerie, deserted base bearing signs of a struggle, and as night falls the Aliens come out . . .

Richard

CRITICISM

Having never seen the film I didn't know quite what to expect. However, I don't think full use has been made of this apparently 'fabulous' licence. Presentation is so important in a game these days that when you have scrolling messages you just don't expect them to wobble around like mad. It's so offputting. Once actually in the game things don't improve immensely. The title screen music just can't be from the film as it's all bouncy and jolly; it doesn't seem to fit at all. The movement from screen to screen is also very poor – horribly jerky which, unfortunately, didn't intice me to get any further into the game.

The crew have set up a MTOB (Mobile Tactical Operations Bay) which enables you to control six crew members individually from an Armoured Personnel Carrier outside of the base. Each member carries a sort of video camera which enables you to see what he sees. Each member (Ripley, Gorman, Hicks, Bishop, Vasquez, and Burke) can be turned to by simply presssing their initial key – Bishop is an android and takes the letter I.

The top half of the screen is taken up by the view of the selected crew member and has a cross-hairs sight at its centre. The cross-hairs can be moved up, down, left and right. When moved to the edge of the screen it scrolls around – as if you are standing in the centre of a room and turning. As well as being used for positioning, the cross-hairs serve as sights for your Smart Gun. When the sights are positioned on a door, hitting space bar gives access to the next room. Next to the doors are the locking mechanisms that can be blasted to prevent aliens from entering. Locked doors can be blasted open.

Bottom centre of the screen is a window which contains a portrait of the crew member presently under control, his or her name above and credit points below. To the left and right respectively are that member's Bio-Functions Trace which gives indication of their health and their ammunition status. Either side of the centre window are three windows. Each little window has the name of an individual member, the room he is presently in and the Bio-Monitor Bar. This Bio bar is linked to the Bio-Function Trace and serves two functions. The first is the life status; a green bar indicates a healthy member, a yellow bar indicates a member that has been captured by the aliens and is being impregnated, a purple bar means that that member has been impregnated and can no longer be saved, no bar means that the member is dead. The second function shows the stamina – every time a member moves he tires and the bar reduces in size, resting restores the bar. If it begins to flash it means that he is almost exhausted and switching to another member rests him.

Anthony

CRITICISM

Jerky the graphics may be, but the thought of what is to come egged me on through the maze. In fact I found ALIENS quite absorbing, though the way you choose the direction to move is quite difficult to master, and can become flustrating when you realise that the new tunnel you were following is in fact where you have already been. Thankfully they give you a good map to follow. This is one game that is not going to instantly appeal to many, but be assured that once you get to grips with the idea ALIEN bashing becomes good fun.

Each member is fitted with a Proximity meter which sounds off when an alien is close. The aliens are quick to react, so missing them with your first shot can prove fatal. Each time a member is captured an alien stands guard as he is impregnated, if you reach him and kill the alien in time he is freed. Dead aliens' bodies vaporise rapidly, but watch out for organic acid that may ooze out when blasted by a smart gun. This acid blood is deadly and destroys everything, crew members included. Small amounts evaporate fairly quickly.

Bio-Mechanical growth appears on walls where an alien has passed. If not shot off it spreads and develops into face huggers and alien eggs.

Your mission is to get as many members of the crew as possible to the Queen's chamber on the far side of the base. All aliens lay eggs here and once entered you must be prepared for anything . . .

Mass

CRITICISM

Not an easy game to get into is ALIENS, a lot of practice is needed to shoot the aliens first time because you rarely get the chance to get a second shot – they're damn quick to react. Rescuing captured crew members is also a rush job, as well as concentrating on the screen you have to have a keen sense of hearing to listen for the bleeps – time wasted is another member gone to the dogs – or should that be aliens. Unfortunately the scrolling is bit of a let down, it's rather jerky to say the least. After overcoming my instant dislike to the scrolling and with a little perseverence I began to get well into the game and found that I rather enjoyed it. There's plenty of engrossing action to keep you busy well into the early hours. It's all a matter of practice.

PRESENTATION 74%
You're even supplied with a map.

GRAPHICS 72%
Shame about the scrolling.

SOUND 69%
Unusually jolly tune, FX serve their purpose.

PLAYABILITY 76%
Not an easy game to get into but then . . .

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 71%
. . . plenty of aliens to zap.

VALUE FOR MONEY 75%
Not a bad price to blast away extra terrestrials.

OVERALL 75%
Once mastered alien blasting is great fun.

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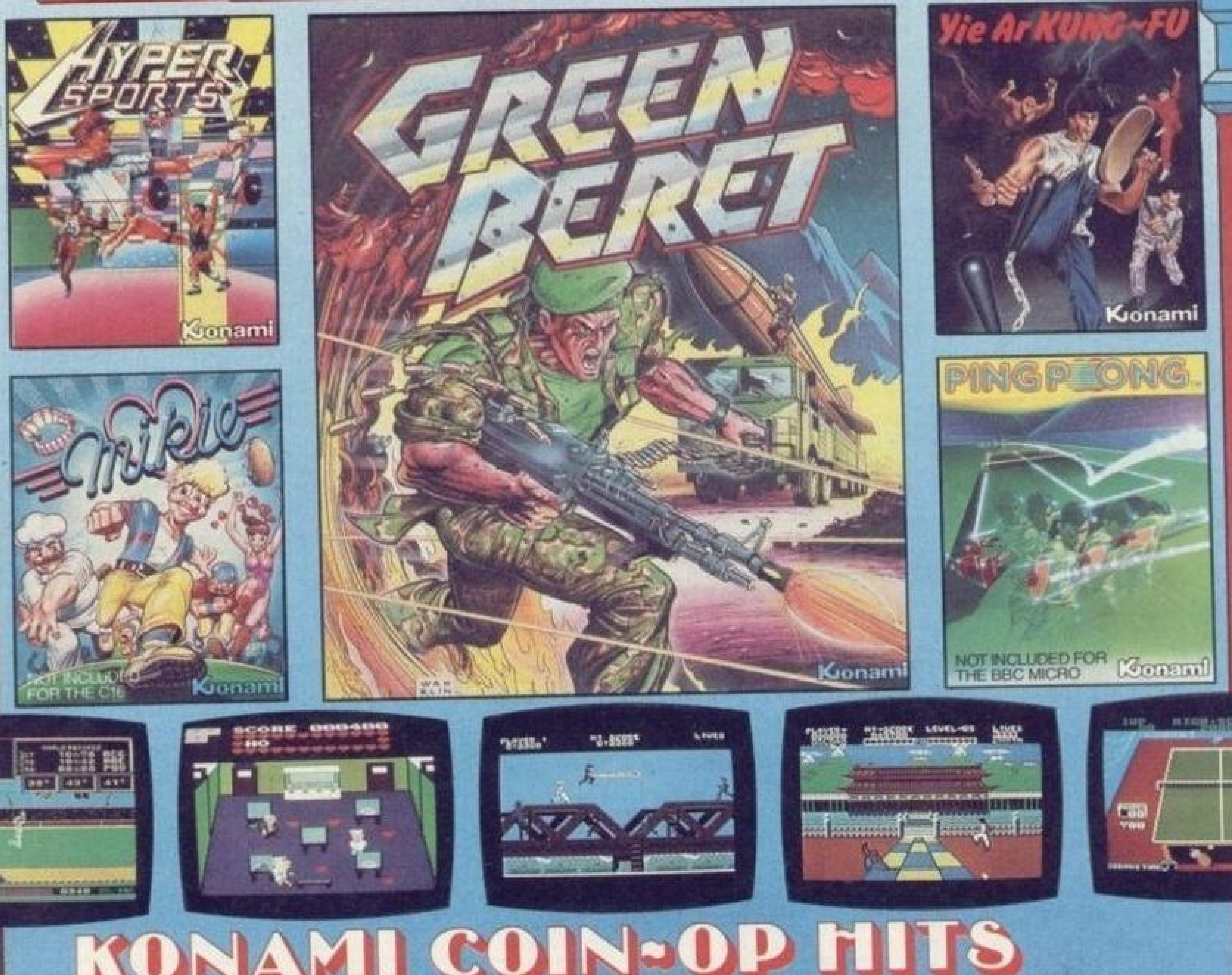
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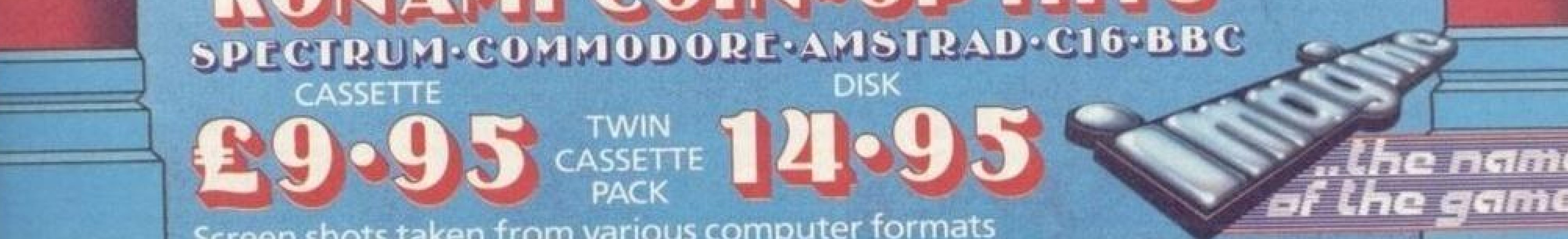

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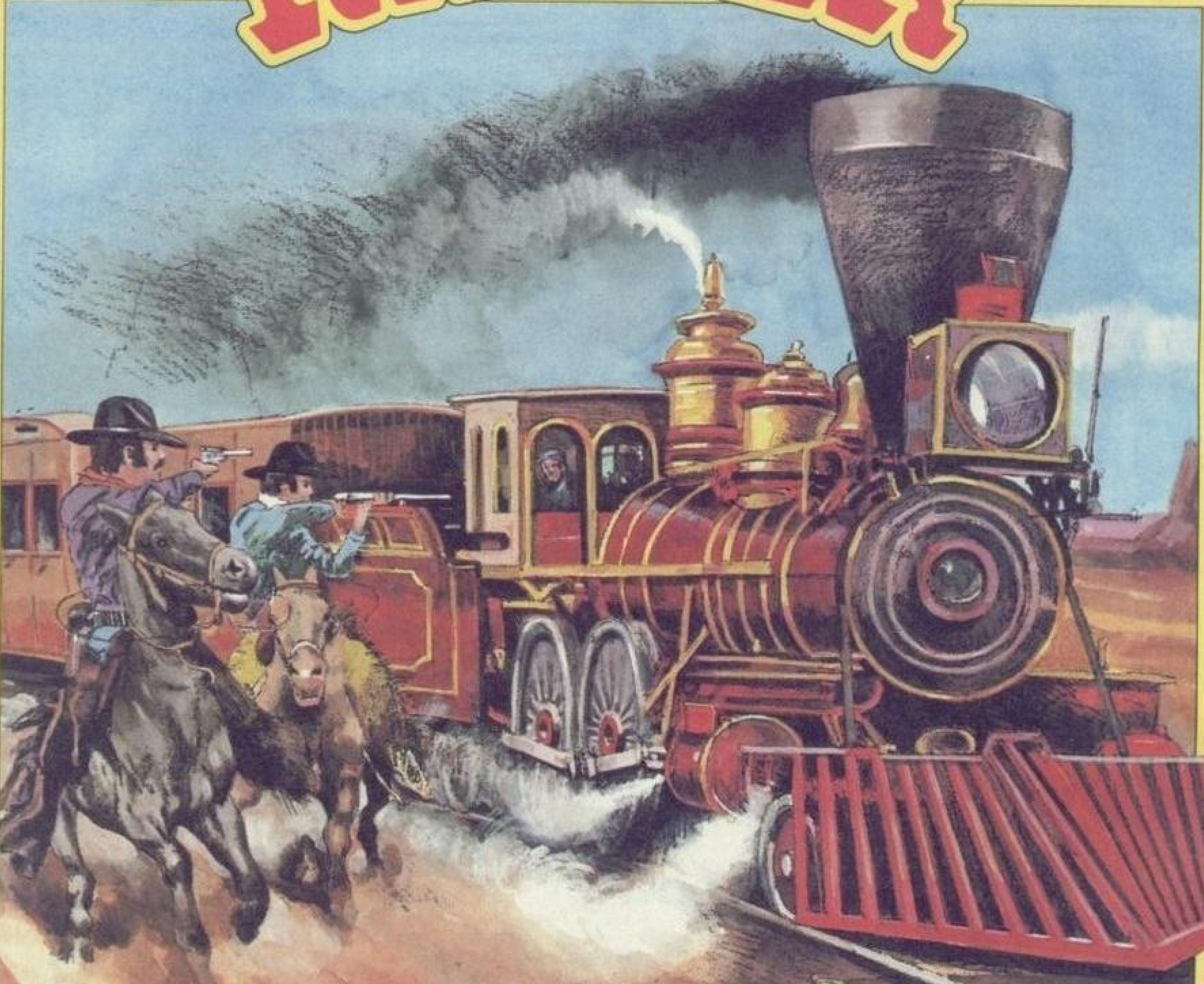

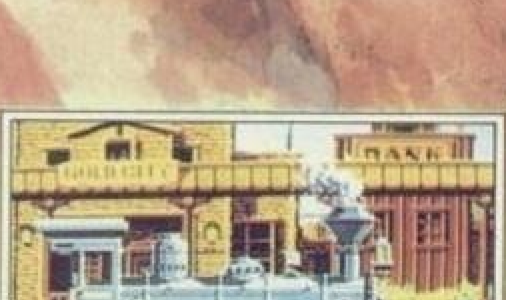

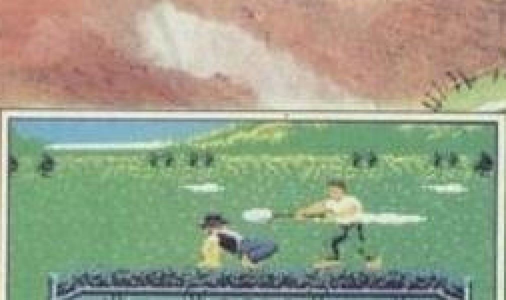

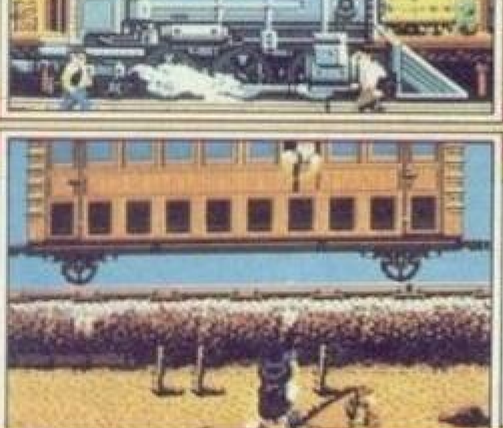

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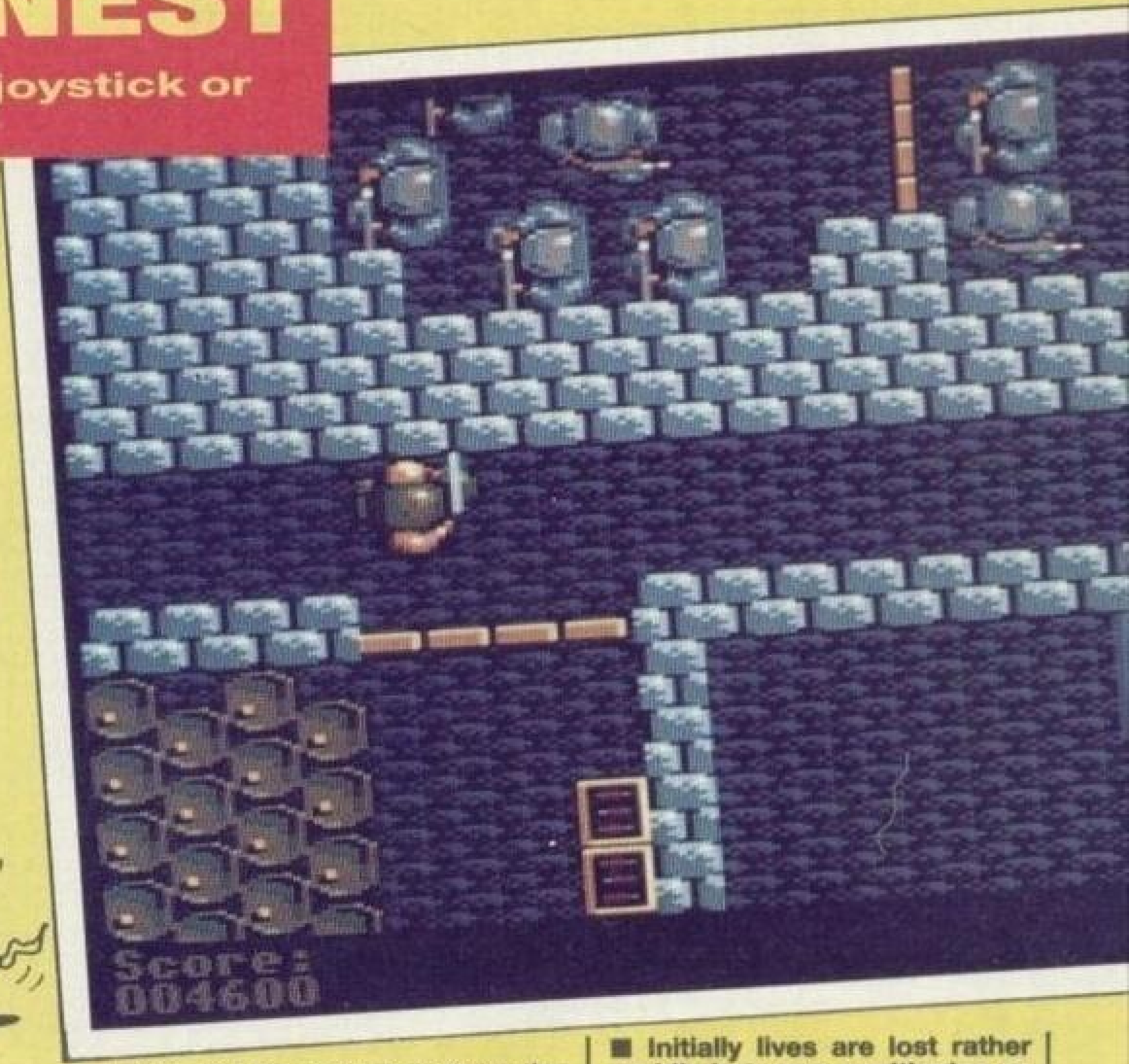
INTO THE EAGLES NEST

Pandora, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys



In the valley trucks move slowly along, transporting troops and ammunition to the fortress stronghold that looms high above. Once the abode of a rich aristocrat it is now a base for many German troops. Why they would be massing in such an unstrategic area is unknown and is causing great concern in the halls of power. You shoulder your gun and take from your pocket the paper containing your orders in a hope that they may read differently this time, but you know they will not. The words are crystal clear. Enter the stronghold and destroy it before its real purpose can be put into action. As a secondary mission it would be in your interests to collect any art treasures (a k-nockverst containing the FALLEN MADONNA WITH THE BIG BOOBIES) that you may find in the commander's private collection. As the next truck passes you quickly jump into the back and slide between two crates of ammunition, soon after you are within the 'Eagles Nest' and your mission must begin.

■ **After previewing the game a while back I knew this was going to be good, but I couldn't imagine how good. Playability is the name of the game here, fanatical action combining amazing graphics. I don't know exactly what makes the game so enjoyable, it's probably because of the immaculate consistency throughout – there's not one part that lets it down. Well, apart from the sound which is a bit disappointing. On the whole though I'd have no grievances about paying nine quid for this as INTO THE EAGLES NEST is one of those games I'd just play to death.**

Richard

Into the Eagles Nest is played from a bird's eye view and puts you inside a maze of corridors in which you must, basically, find your way around and eventually get to the next level having first obtained the pass to give you access to the lift. Once in the lift you are given the choice of which level of the building you wish to enter. Of course there are the inevitable meanies who try to hinder your progress, in this case German soldiers.

Three saboteurs have already entered the fortress before you, and most of the work has been done already. The problem was that each was captured before they could finish their mission, and as a result you need only to set off the charges that they have already placed all over the castle. As these three were caught alive there is also a possibility that you will come across them. Once freed your comrades will automatically follow you thus making life a little more difficult as you must protect them as well. Ammunition must be found around the castle as you can only carry 99 rounds at a time. It takes two direct hits to knock out any one soldier and as there are many to contend with your ammo runs out rather rapidly.

If the Commando under your control comes into contact with a soldier then your character's 'hit points' will increase to a maximum of 99 at which time you will die, although by picking up first aid kits you can reduce the number and so last a while longer. Pressing the pause button will give you access to info on the amount of ammo left, keys being carried and hits sustained.

Shots must be taken very carefully as they carry off the screen. This becomes a problem as boxes of dynamite are scattered around and two direct hit on these will end the game. The first hit opens the box and the second destroys the contents. As well as dynamite these boxes can also contain jewels and can be collected for points along with the various other treasures. The further you get into the game the more locked doors are to be found thus more keys need to be acquired, the more food you need to keep mobile and, of course, the more ammo that is needed to deal with the never ending onslaught of Germans.

■ **Although the game does not have instant appeal of GAUNTLET it does have much better game play. The graphics are large and very well defined though the sound was a bit of a disappointment. Pandora have certainly packed a lot into the Amstrad, those great graphics must have taken a lot of memory. On comparison with Gauntlet I would probably go for Gauntlet but INTO THE EAGLES NEST is still one of the best varients of this genre of game.**

Anthony

■ **Initially lives are lost rather rapidly but once positioning so as to sustain the minimum hits is mastered INTO THE EAGLES NEST becomes great fun to play. The graphics are very good indeed, large and well defined, but it's a shame the sound effects are not of the same standard. The game is extremely playable, plenty to shoot and collect, and just so addictive.**

PRESENTATION 89%
Good instructions, good layout on screen.

GRAPHICS 92%
Superb definition from an overhead view.

SOUND 88%
Interesting rendition of '633' squadron.

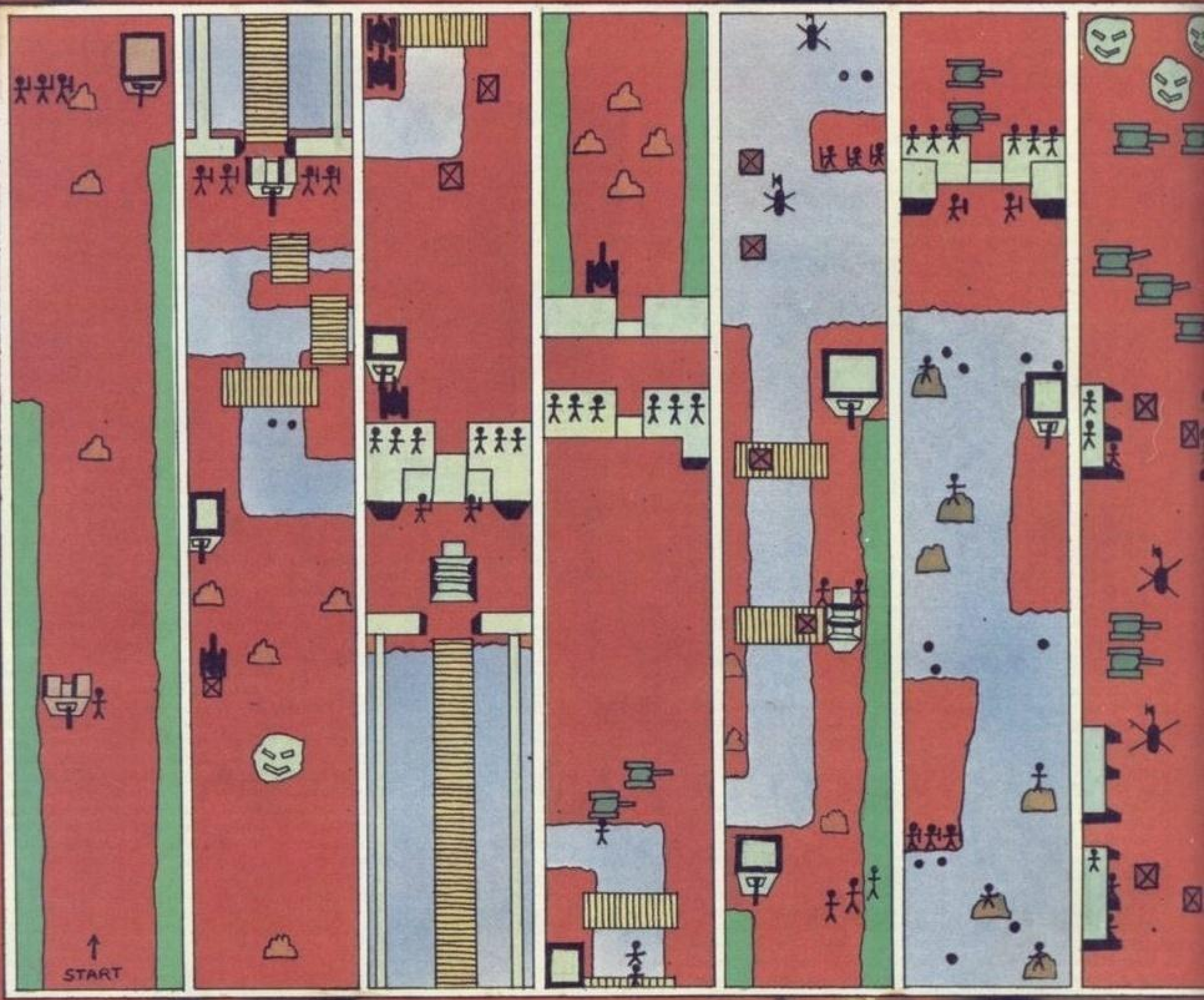
PLAYABILITY 92%
Simple fast action.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 90%
Simple, compulsive action, right from the start.

VALUE FOR MONEY 91%
A quid less than normal – good buy!

OVERALL 90%
Fast, addictive and most important of all, lots of fun.

AMTIX! Accolade



IKARI
WARRIORS

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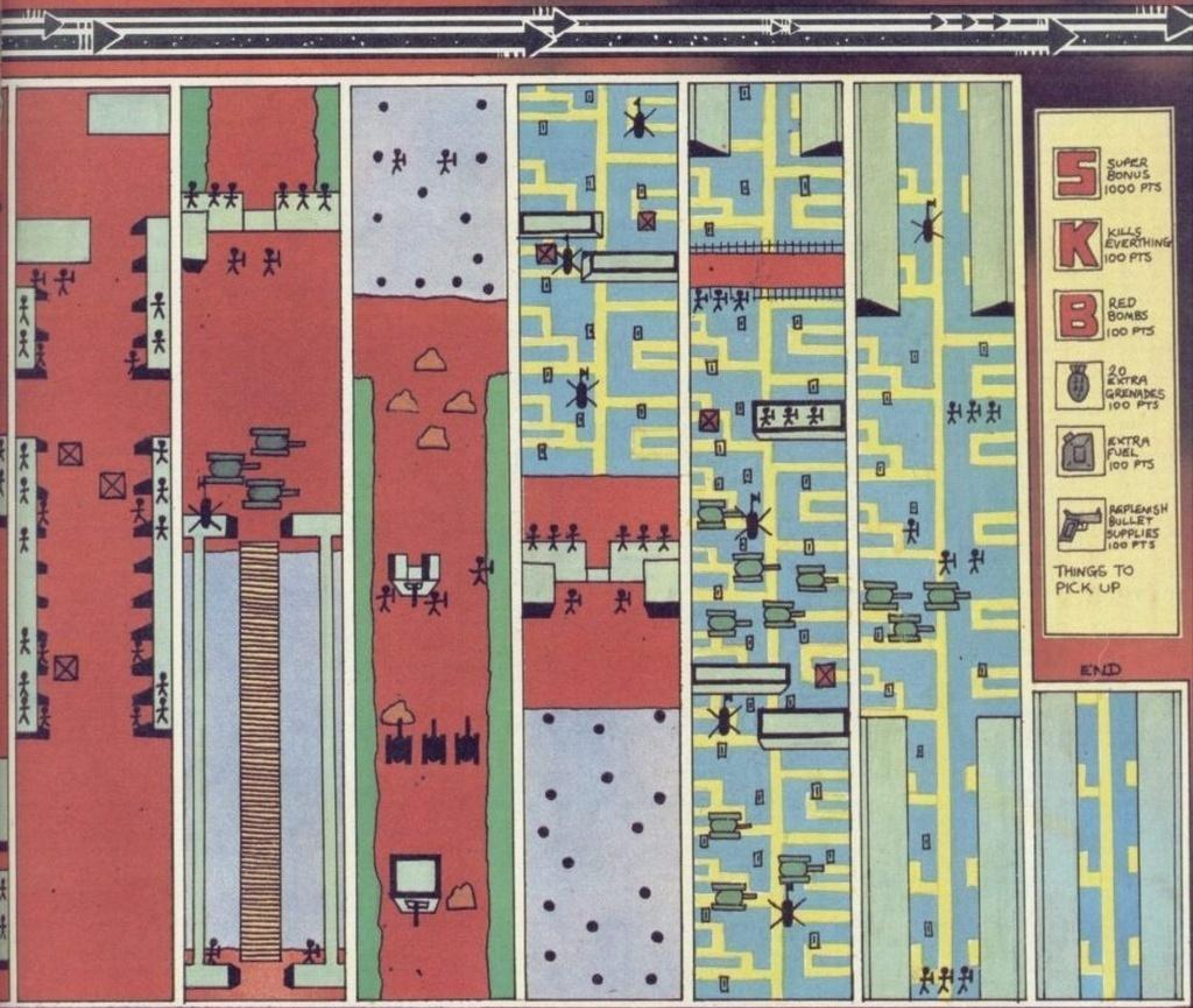
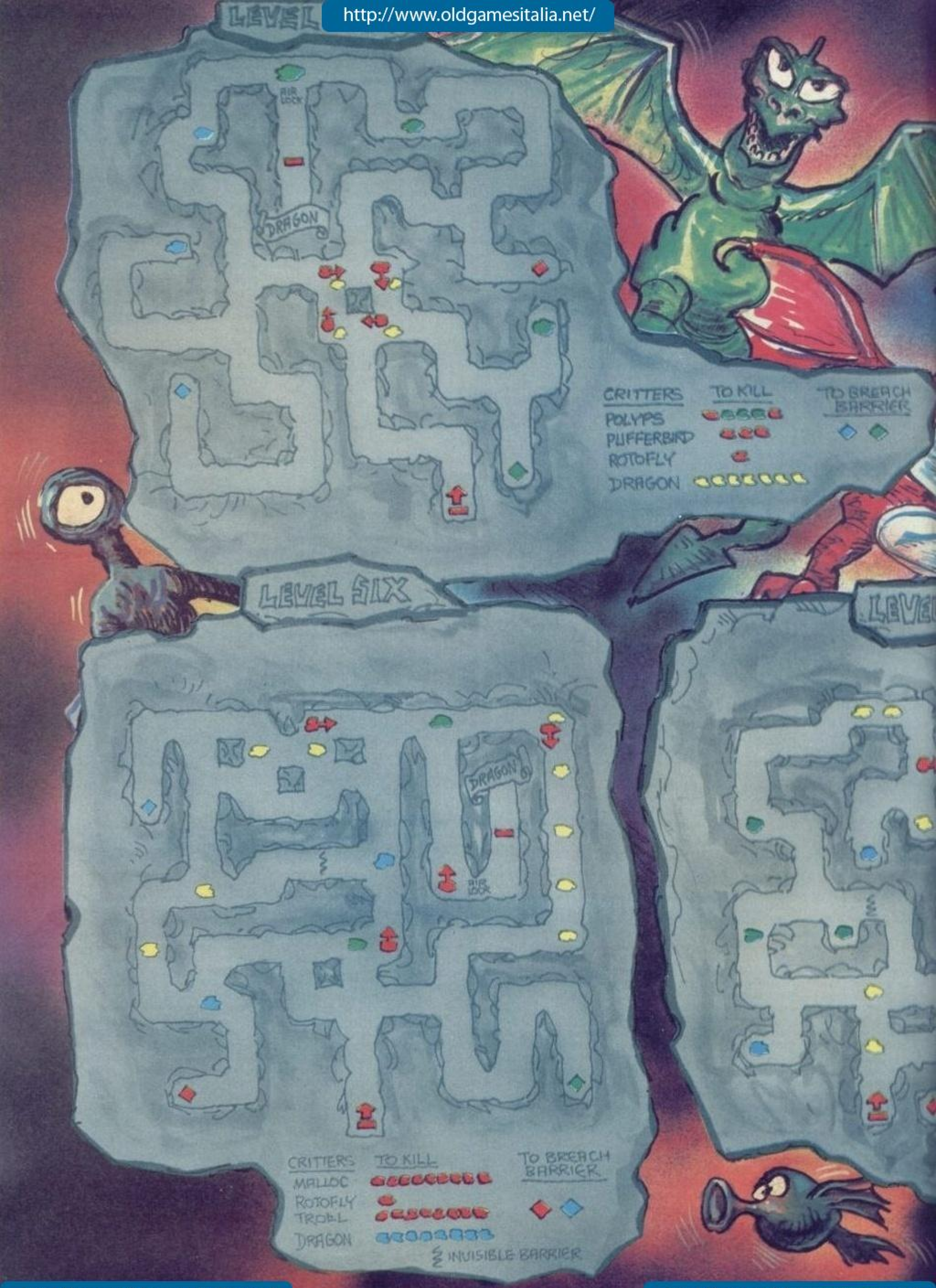
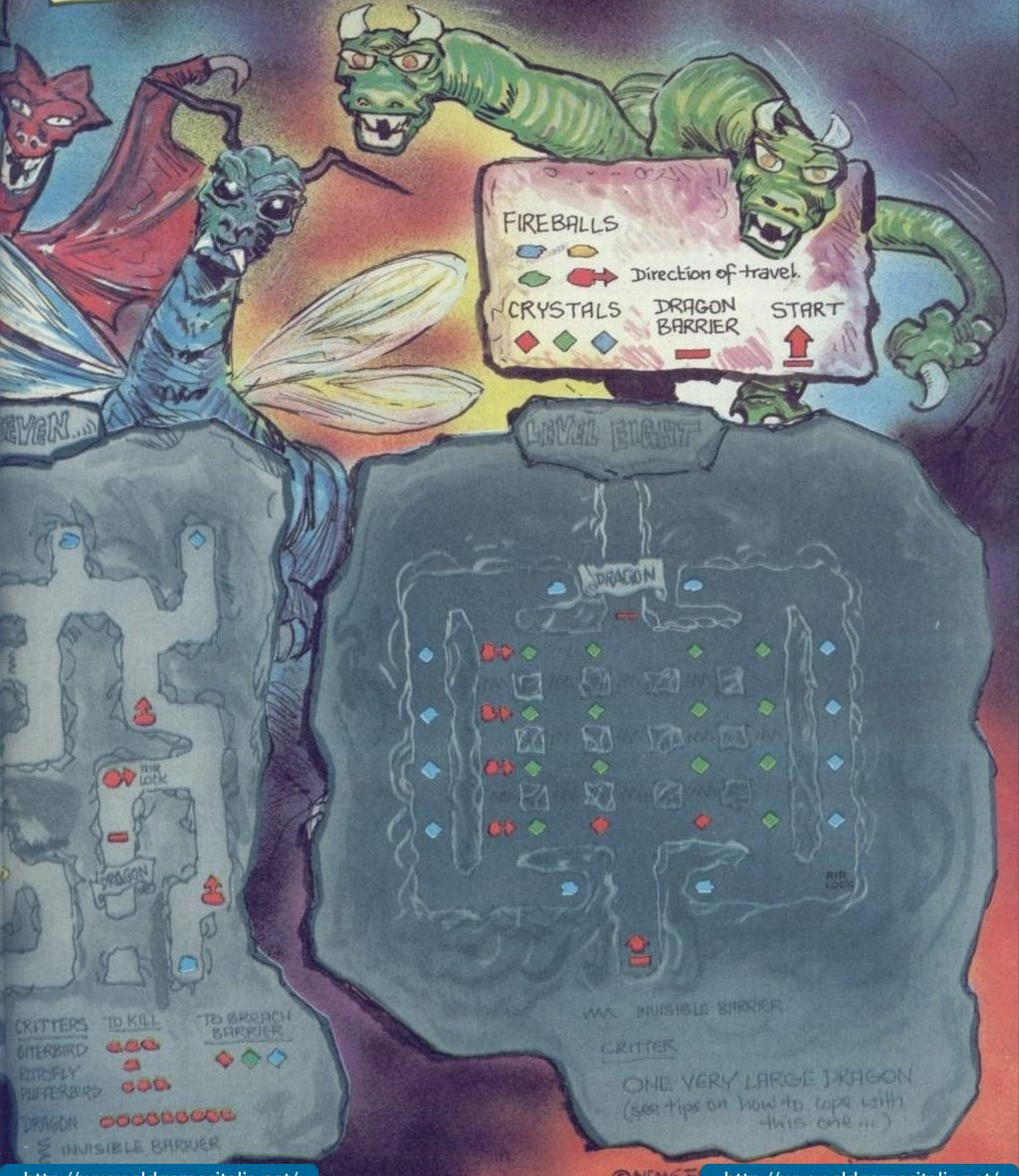
- WATER
- SOIL
- ARTIFICIAL SURFACE
- BRIDGE
- YOUR TANK
- ENEMY TANK
- ☒ LANDMINE
- ROCK
- ENEMY SOLDIER
- ENEMY SOLDIER + BAZOOKA
- PILLBOX
- BARRACKS
- ● UNDERWATER ENEMY
- ENEMY HELI-COPTER


S
SUPER BONUS 1000 PTS
K
KILLS EVERTHING 100 PTS
B
RED BOMBS 100 PTS
20 EXTRA GRENADES 100 PTS
EXTRA FUEL 100 PTS
REPLENISH BULLET SUPPLIES 100 PTS
THINGS TO PICK UP
END


LEVEL
AIR LOCK
DRAGON
CRITTERS
TO KILL
TO BREACH BARRIER
POLYPS
PUFFERBIRD
ROTOFLY
DRAGON
LEVEL SIX
DRAGON
AIR LOCK
CRITTERS
TO KILL
TO BREACH BARRIER
MALLOC
ROTOFLY
TROLL
DRAGON
INVISIBLE BARRIER
LEVEL

The EIDOLON

THE LAST FOUR LEVELS!
— LEVELS 1-4 — SEE ISSUE 12 ...


FIREBALLS
Direction of travel.
CRYSTALS
DRAGON BARRIER
START
SEVEN...
AIR LOCK
DRAGON
CRITTERS
TO KILL
TO BREACH BARRIER
BITERBIRD
ROTOFLY
PUFFERBIRD
DRAGON
INVISIBLE BARRIER
LEVEL EIGHT
DRAGON
AIR LOCK
INVISIBLE BARRIER
CRITTER
ONE VERY LARGE DRAGON
(see tips on how to cope with this one ...)
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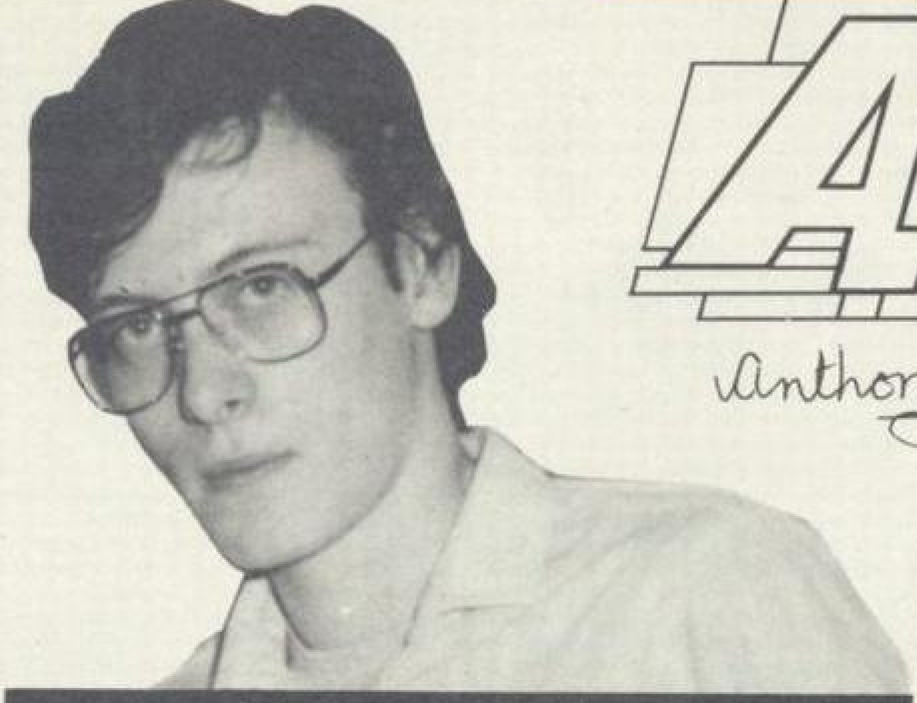


AM tips

Anthony Clarke

Did everyone enjoy their Christmas? Yes I know that was a month ago, but we write things quite early around here. It seems that my comment about games getting easier is unfounded as so few full solutions have turned up this issue. This month we have the last four sections of The Eidolon (the first person to tell us what happens at the end will get the autographs of the team), and for those of us who are having problems with Ikari Warriors there is a full run-down of what you will come up against.

First out of the bag is a quick apology, the disc POKE for ELITE has a small typo. One of the filenames is wrong and should read 'COMMONXX' and not **'COMMONAX'**. All right then?.

Generally, routines that appear on these pages will appear with instructions on how they should be used. If the POKEs are for a tape version of a game, this is how to use them . . .

a) Type in the POKE and save it on a separate tape.
b) Reset the machine and load the POKE in.
c) Insert the cassette containing the game you are about to POKE.
Rewind the tape and press PLAY on the recorder.
d) Type RUN to run the POKE program.

If all goes well the game program should load and run. Sometimes the POKE program will not show up the title page, or the game may not appear to load in the usual way. Just be patient and let the tape run. Follow any on screen instructions that may come up — for instance, you may have to press a key before the program will load the next file. If the program still won't load or you get a *Syntax error* or some other programming error, reset the machine and reload the POKE program, correct any errors, resave the POKE and try again from step B . . .

DON'T COPY POKES FROM MAGAZINES

It has come to our attention that several POKEs printed in AMTIX! have been copied straight from other magazines. We do understand there are times when similar techniques have to be employed to provide a POKE for a game, and that this may be similar to one already printed. Unfortunately even in this case the provider of the POKE would be in breach of copyright and this could result in court action. We cannot check every piece of work that is sent to us, so we are relying on you not to copy POKEs from other magazines as this causes problems for everyone concerned.

BIGGLES

(Mirrorsoft)

MIRRORSOFT
Biggles
AMSTRAD CPC CASSETTE

Stephen Brown of Newcastle-on-Tyne has sent us tips for all sorts of games, so let's kick off with his Biggles tips.

The secret code for the helicopter is NERW spelled backwards. At the start of the game you are flying forwards at 45 degrees, pull down on the joystick until you are flying backwards at 45 degrees. Move the stick to the right until it gets to the number bearing 000 degrees. Fly to the map number 11. Look along the white line on the detailed map and you should see a red square. Land here and get the machine gun. Take off and go to any other red squares on the map, collecting all the equipment on the way. There are 2 people on this map, get Bertie, fly at a bearing of 180 until you get to map number 10. Collect the equipment from the red squares. Fly at a bearing of 270 to the allied camp on map 10. Land on the red triangle and you'll be told the location of the convent.

Pick up Mary and fly to any other red squares on this sector, stocking up on fuel found around the camp. Now fly to the convent. You'll probably be attacked by two planes (flying Nuns? – TC). Shoot one down and you'll probably be left with the other on your tail. Slow down and fly backwards and you should find it in your sights. On the same map as the convent is Smithy, pick him up and drop Mary. Once at the convent you'll be told the location of the sound weapon (divine knowledge? – TC).

Fuel is shown as a red dot, and when picked up will go either straight into the fuel tank or onto your equipment list. You must land to top up the tank with any fuel you are carrying.

Machine Gun – to use this you need ammo and Bertie.

Repairs – you need Smithy aboard to repair any damage. He can do this only on the ground at the main locations.

TAU CETI

(CRL)

How about some tips for the special edition of Tau Ceti. Thanks again to Stephen Brown of Newcastle-on-Tyne.

The first thing to do at Reema, your starting position, is to find the library and reactor sub-station. You start near to the town but the direction finder will guide you to its centre should you stray. The sub-station will contain one or more control rods, and the library a timevault.

Docking – There are six kinds of building you can dock with: two types of reactor, two types of supply stations, libraries and the lander. Head towards the building gradually slowing. A blue rectangle should appear and start to fill the screen. Continue to slow to just faster than the minimum speed (unless you have infinite shields, in which case you can hit the thing as fast as you like – TC). It is important to remember that if you hit a building with your lasers or a missile, you will not be allowed to dock with it again.

Supply Centres – There are two types, military and civilian. All towns have one of each, and once docked you can access the equip function. A menu with six options will appear, refuel, flares, missiles etc. Missiles and Anti-missiles can only be installed at the military centre. The repair system will recharge the shields and repair any systems damaged in combat.

Libraries – You'll find one of these in every town, usually near the centre and reactor substation. They look like a civilian supply centre with a diamond on the top. Once docked, the command 'LI' will take you to a menu screen. The data banks allow you access to information under many headings, but most of it isn't very relevant. The city map allows you to examine detailed maps of the city you are in, its outposts and neighbouring cities. These show the positions of buildings and enemies, but are not updated when these are destroyed. The main map gives information about the defence levels of different towns, the ID chart shows you what the buildings and ships look like on screen, and gives information on their defences and weapons.

Timevaults. – These are found in libraries and provide equipment. You're told on docking whether there is one present or not, and can access it by typing 'TIMEVAULT'. Eight rectangles in a circle will appear with a ninth in the middle. Put the cursor over the centre and press fire. A pattern will form in the outer rectangle. Put the cursor over the rectangle, remembering where it is, and press fire. If you have chosen correctly a rectangle at the top of the screen will light up, if not you will have to start all over again. If you get the right rectangle the pattern will reappear and you must hit the same one as before in relation to the others. There are six objects to be found in the vaults, each one serving a purpose.

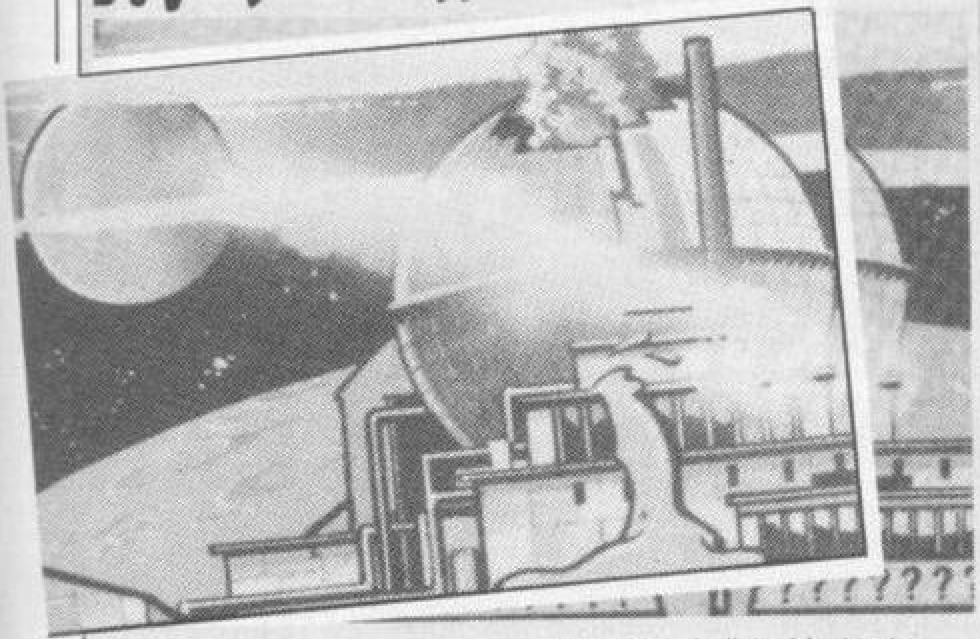
CEBERUS

(Players)

Navid Afzal of London has sent us some rather amusing names to type into the old High score table. Try them in the order.

KEVIN PARKER
PLAYERS
INTERCEPTOR

MELTDOWN



(ALLIGATA)

Finally from Stephen Brown we have some tips for Meltdown which should get you through a bit more of the game.

Always make sure that you are standing still when you are firing, otherwise you will somersault and may land on a cyberman and die quite quickly. Don't stand still and let a cyberman come towards you, move into its line of fire and shoot it because it will have less time to shoot you. After releasing a bullet, sidestep to avoid incoming fire. In rooms which are cut in half by two storey computers, you can always shoot one of the stacks and make it explode. It is always the same one for each screen. In the room before the Gamma Radiation room you will find a stationary cyberman in the top right hand corner. Touch it and the suit will be transferred onto you. At the other side of the Gamma room you must drop the suit in the same position as you found it so that you are allowed to leave the room.

DOOMDARK'S REVENGE

(Beyond)

Mr. Abufera (well that's what his signature looks like) from Malta has sent in these tip-ettes that should help you on your way across the ice-mark.

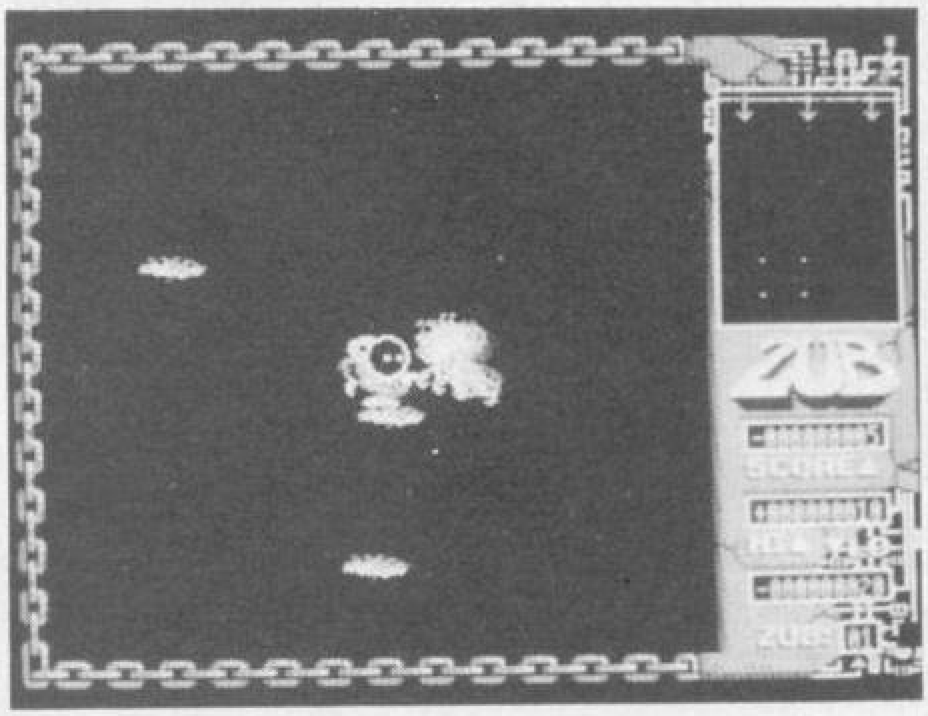
The Flames of Dawn:- these renew the day to dawn for a particular character.

The Claws of Night:- these are of no help as night will fall.

The Langour of Death:- this completely depletes your energy, making it necessary to rest for a couple of days.

The Springs of Life:- these totally renew your energy.

ZUB



(MASTERTRONIC)

This one was produced by my own fair hand (alright grotty mitts with no nails) – no I didn't copy it from Crash as I finished it long before they did.

To get to Zub 10 and back again you must follow the teleport table so that you go to the location you want and then work your way back again.

LOCATION	LEFT TELEPORT	MIDDLE TELEPORT	RIGHT TELEPORT
1	2	3	2
2	1	1	3
3	1	2	4
4	6	5	3
5	4	6	4
6	7	4	5
7	8	9	6
8	7	9	9
9	7	1	8
10	9	9	9

You should now be able to take the quickest route both to and from ZUB 10. There is a little suprise at the end of the game that will have you all groaning.

Well everyone, that seems to be it. It seems that everyone was more interested in playing the games this Christmas, and so they should be after all the hard work and dedication that programmers put into games such as *Breakthru* and *Beach Head II*. Now what about a winner. This time the £20 voucher goes out to Iain Carrie of Ashtead, Surrey for his map of Ikari Warriors. Oh! just one last point before I sign off, that picture of me in the Christmas special was very misleading, it was a bad camera angle, and my hand was in fact behind my back. In fact it wasn't even me, it was . . . it was . . . a ZUB!!!!!!!.

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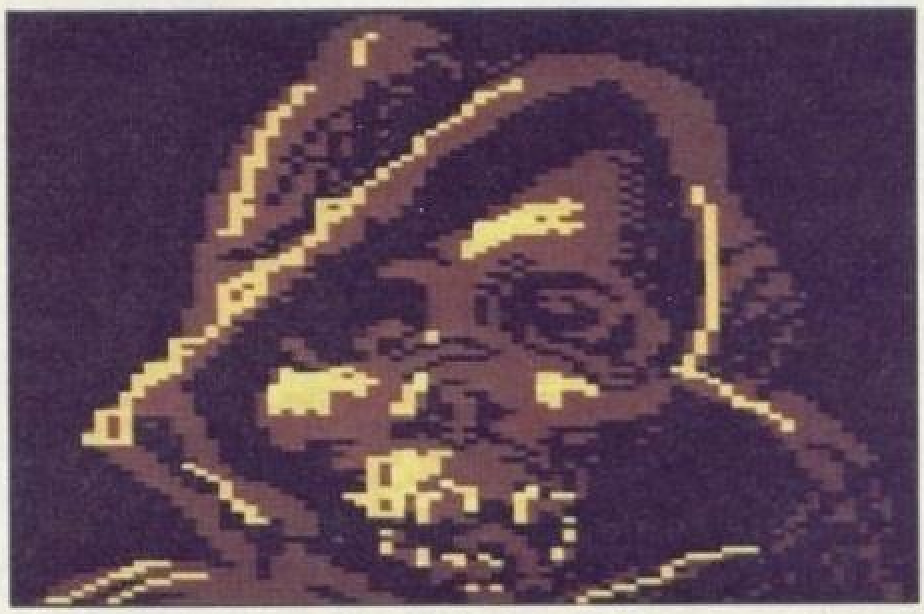
THE MYSTERY MAN RETURNS

I am happy to report that Arcana is back with a vengeance this issue as is the list of Allied Adventurers Inc. By now quite a few people are wondering who I am but I'm afraid I am going to keep them in suspense for a while yet. I enjoy being a mysterious person!

I have several excellent products to examine this issue as well as others which do leave a bit to be desired. It is nice to see so much material pouring in for Arcana and I can only re-iterate that I welcome lots more material in this direction, be it tips, maps or ideas. Keep sending in your solutions and also your problems and I will do my utmost to deal with them all.

In the next issue I hope Crumbly will give me space to print the full solution to the latest mega adventure from CRL (see elsewhere in my section) but in the meantime you will have to work out Dracula for yourself. Until the next time!



DRACULA

CRL, £7.95 cass

In the far dark corners of every human soul there lurks a black crouching spectre. The ghost like shadow that waits, a shrouded thing that pulsates with a malignant evil. The name of that ghost is . . . fear. Fear is born of the Devil, it has no beginning, no end, it is eternal, omnipotent. Fear is at your side as you listen to a half heard sound. It is here, a finger's touch away. It is always behind you . . . especially when you are . . . alone.

AAAAARRRGGAAAA!!!!

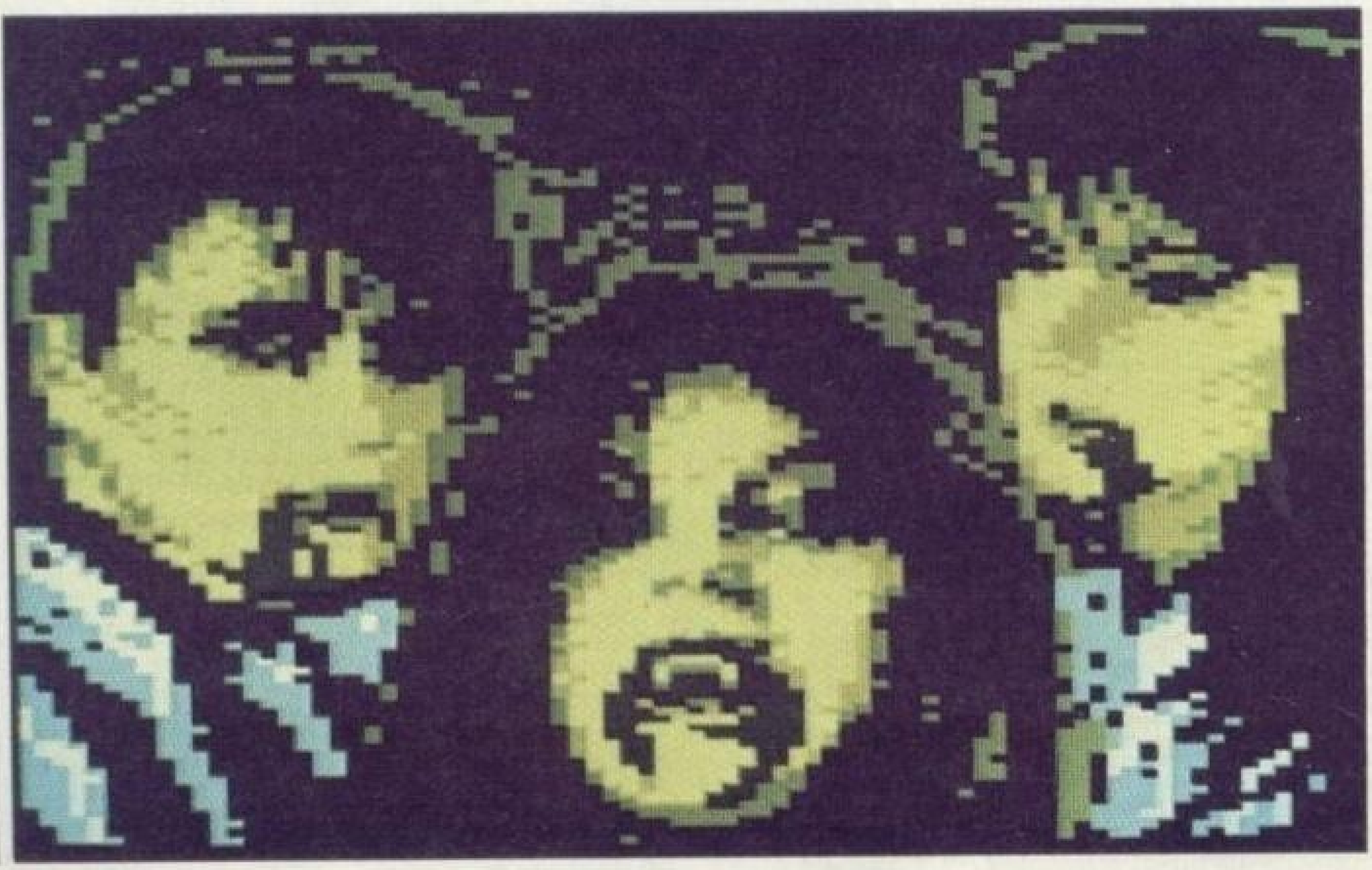
Mr Pike has done it again! *The Pilgrim* was very good . . . *Dracula* is great! If you are 15 or over, rush out and buy this new release from CRL. Take it home, bribe any other occupants of your lair to go out for the evening, turn the lights off, light a candle and place it in the nearest draughty nook and load Part 1 . . . The first night. If you have any spooky music, bung it on the stereo and begin.

The first thing to remember is not to rush through the game trying to complete it as soon as possible. Take it easy . . . read the text as though it were a book, drink in the atmosphere Rod creates with his excellent prose.

This is one of the few adventures in which I looked for ways to die . . . throughout the three parts there are a multitude of deaths awaiting you, each one nastier than the last with screens (or should that be screams?) and screens of explicit text.

In part one, you play Jonathan Harker, solicitor, whose task it is to visit Count Dracula at his castle and finalise the details for his purchase of a house in England. A job you can get your teeth into. Your main aim is to get through the first night at the Golden Krone Hotel . . . alive! Now, believe it or not, there are only seven locations and not too many puzzles to contend with in this section. However, once you have made a decision about your evening meal and sorted out your room arrangements sit back and enjoy . . .

You will either make it through to morning or (the likelier of the two) you will die in one fashion or another. Your demise will be displayed graphically . . . not a pretty sight.



"The Arrival"

In the same vein as part one, ie: You play John Harker, only now you actually get to Castle Dracula (eventually!) and once there you must escape. This part has much more for the Adventurer to think about and do. The ruler of damned disappears each day and leaves you to yourself. I have my own theory about where he goes, I think he plays cricket for the Thensyhomia Terrors . . . After all, he is a first class bat. Anyway . . . certain locations need to be visited more than once as time moves on and the environment and objects within it can change somewhat.

The Labyrinth to the south of the gloomy corridor is great, have fun trying to map it, but beware the rats!

Eventually you will reach the old chapel where the Prince of ▶

chaos rests during daylight . . . make him cross and run like hell . . . into part three.

"The Hint"

This is the best bit, in my opinion, get your own back time. In this section you play Doctor John Seward the owner of the asylum which lies adjacent to the Corfax estate, the property in which Dracula has a stake! One of your patients has recently escaped a situation not too alarming to begin with but which soon becomes prevalent.

There is a lot more interaction in part three, although by no means does this result in less atmospheric text. After visiting the village for the first time, hang about in the country lanes for a while . . . just for a touch of atmosphere!

Eventually Van Helsing arrives to give you a hand to recapture Renfield the escapee. He doesn't stay for very long although he leaves you a useful pressy on his departure.

Onward to the Corfax estate to rid the world of the prince of darkness, a fangless task if the truth be known. One small gripe: I would have liked to have had the option to type in "Kill Dracula" or "Drive Stake" rather than have the game play itself out. Nonetheless, the ending is still very good.

The 3 adventures are written using the Quill with fiddly bits courtesy of the CRL boffins. Input is of the usual verb noun type, although I must admit I trust Rod Pike's use of this utility more than I do other authors. Should I receive the message "I cannot do that" then I know that I actually can't perform a particular task at that point of the game, rather than not being able to carry out a function because I haven't typed in the exact verb noun combination required by the author. Rod does try to include as many synonyms as memory allows in his games to the player.

I became completely immersed in *Dracula*. I have not had sweaty palms through playing an adventure since I came face to face with Simchig. This is a very good trio of games which deserve to be played more than once just in case you missed out on a particular way to die first time round.

Someday, someone will find that casket in the cellars of Corfax Hall and someone will surely remove the stake that is buried in the mound of greying dust within that coffin. When they do the vampire will walk again . . . perhaps tonight!!

Atmosphere	81%
Plot	70%
Interaction	52%
Lastability	76%
Value for money	70%
Overall	70%

First and last paragraph courtesy of Hammer City Records Ltd.

KENTILLA

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass

It is my understanding that Mr Brewster (our sister magazine, CRASH'S adventure maestro) wrote this game some years ago. I think it would be fair to say that it shows.

The inlay card gives lots of info appertaining to the cleverness of this adventure – visa vi – the understanding of such phrases as "Say to Ogeron, Give me sword" and "Unlock red door with large key" but it neglects to impart on the background of the game itself. I know that *Kentilla* is quite old and has had good coverage within the computer game media, but that is no reason to take it for granted that purchasers of the adventure will automatically know what is going on and why I would have liked to enter the fray armed with little more information about my role and ghost. Perhaps finding out is supposed to be part of the game?

Any road-up let's give it a go.

You start, empty handed, at Ogeron's house (Whoever he is!), opening the door allows access to his dwelling where we find the man himself and a sword. Dallying here awhile is informative to a point..as he hands over the sword, Ogeron tells us that it is the sword of the great warrior Ashka and that Grako(?) is held in the black tower. One assumes, then, that Grako is the enemy and the sword, your ally.

Leave the house, turn East and immediately get captured by the dastardly URGA-MAULS. With all possessions confiscated you are thrown into their dungeon wherein we meet lva. Look around the cell for a useful item, speak the magic word and duff up the large Urga-Maul for a way out.

This is quite a violent game, there being many and varied Urga-Mauls, rattling Quargs and the like to kill or be killed by. Each time you are injured your strength is depleted although this may be countered with healing spells and notions which are dotted about the land.

The plot is fairly basic, although there is lots to do and you can wander around avoiding being beaten up and admiring the sparsely described countryside, or locking and unlocking doors with various keys to your hearts delight.

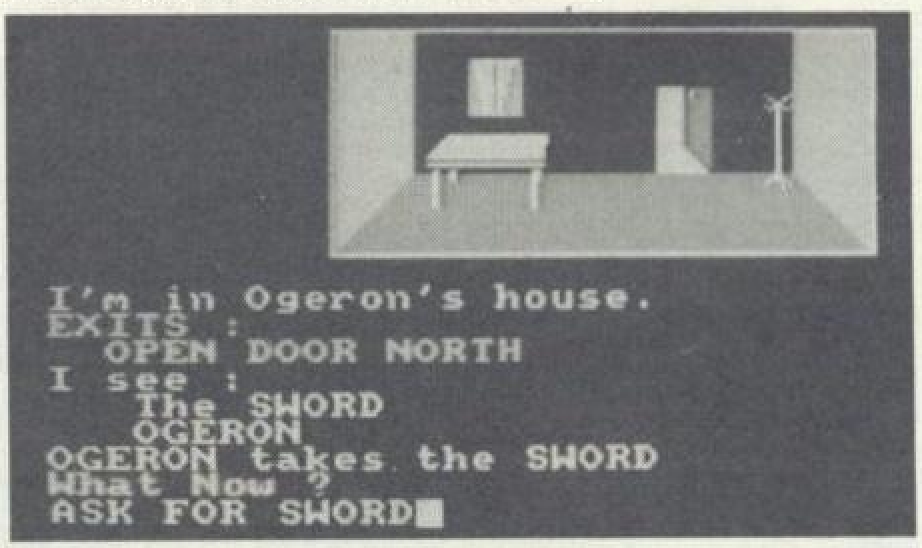
There are a number of annoying little quirks in Kentilla. For example at the southern fertile bank of the river Cara you can cross by swinging on the rope. However, there appears to be nothing to attach the rope to. Typing in "Throw Rope" gives the reply that the rope catches in the tree and holds. I'm damned if I can see a tree anywhere..must be one of those new fangled magic ones, invisible to the human eye. While I'm in mode, the wooden boat (hidden in the vegetation, apparently has a hole in it but you don't discover this until it's too late and you're afloat). A watery grave awaits.

The screen display is alright, most locations have a little graphic picture which adds nothing to the meagre text descriptions and I felt a distinct lack of atmosphere in the game. What I did like was the option to look at adjoining locations from your current position to see who, or what, might be lurking.

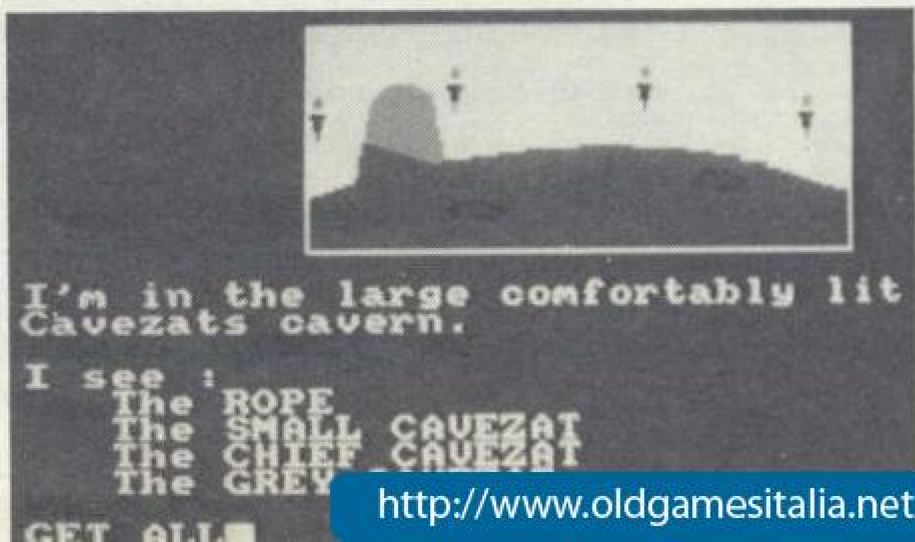
Overall although the price is right, I wasn't too impressed. Having to type in "Unlock red door with large key" etc, soon became tedious. Even though you can repeat previous commands by "hitting" the "copy" key (something else we are not told on the cassette inlay!) mucking about killing Urga-Mauls is not my favourite pastime.

Kentilla would be alright for newcomers to adventures as an introduction to the land of Text Input, but for experienced key tappers I'm not so sure it would hold interest for very long. Good in its day perhaps.

Atmosphere	30%
Plot	31%
Interaction	50%
Lastability	42%
Value for money	56%
Overall	41%



```
I'm in Ogeron's house.
EXITS :
   OPEN DOOR NORTH
I see :
   The SWORD
   OGERON
OGERON takes the SWORD
What Now ?
ASK FOR SWORD█
```



```
I'm in the large comfortably lit
Cavezats cavern.

I see :
   The ROPE
   The SMALL CAVEZAT
   The CHIEF CAVEZAT
   The GREY

GET ALL█
```

TWICE SHY

Mosaic Publishing, £9.95 cass,

As I am something of a fan of the writings of Dick Francis and, having enjoyed the Ram Jam Incorporation's earlier adventure attempt *Valkyrie 17*, I must admit this game couldn't load fast enough for me. I was itching to get my pinkies around it (can I say that?) and place myself in the role of Dick Francis hero.

While the old box of chips whistled and clicked to itself (I must get it seen to) I had time to read the inlay card — as the book doesn't come with the package.

You play the part of Jonathon Derry, physics teacher at East Middlesex Comprehensive. You become the custodian of a set of cassette tapes (eventually) whose purpose it is up to you to discover, whilst avoiding certain nefarious characters within the game.

The program is in two parts — one side being the adventure — the other is a horse racing game which you may play on its own or use it as an integral part of the adventure to make money (if you're lucky). When at a racing venue in the adventure, simply type in 'RACE' anf follow the on screen instructions to load up for a flutter on the ponies. At the end of the event whatever cash you've made or lost, you may take back into the adventure section with you! Sounds good eh?

The bumf goes on to tell us of the parser. The game will understand such sentences as ''Say to Sarah'', ''Go North and shut the door'' and ''Go North, east and south then unlock the door, drop the keys and go South''. As you see, sentences can be strung together using a comma 'and' or 'then'.

You begin the game in your sitting room with Sarah Derry — (I haven't read this particular Francis thriller — is Sarah your wife or sister? We are not told!) — and the phone is giving it some. Try answering the phone and Sarah swipes it from your grasp gesturing for you to keep shtum while she listens. Eventually she informs you of a baby napping and rushes out!

Sarah is a fast mover — coax her into the bathroom — two locations away — rush back down to the sitting room checking for no sign of Sarah and then answer the phone. Blow me if she doesn't swipe it again! Look around though — she's still not there — I'm confused.

This is all in the first 3 or 4 locations — what delights are to follow!

After wandering through the house, picking up the pink towel, rifle, pills, cheque etc, I found the keys to the front door and my (t)rusty Peugot, so it was exit house, enter car. I don't wish to pick petty faults but, while in the car, I would like to have been able to (type) ''Start Engine'' — but I couldn't — it had to be ''start car'' — to get the engine running — I know it's a very minor detail but it niggled at me throughout the game.

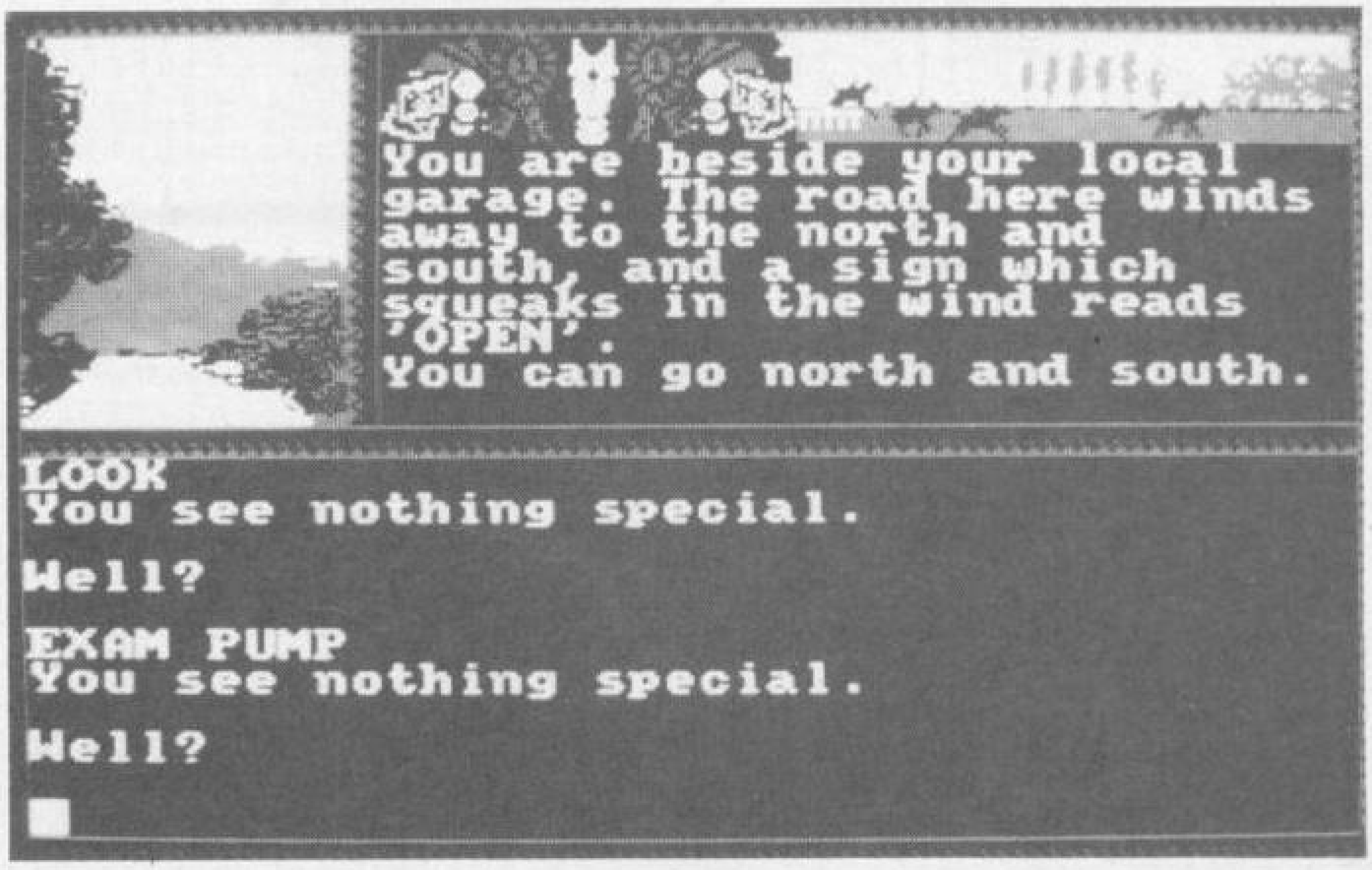
Onward ever Onward

To the bank first to get my cheque cashed. Then find a garage to help stop the fuel gauge flashing.

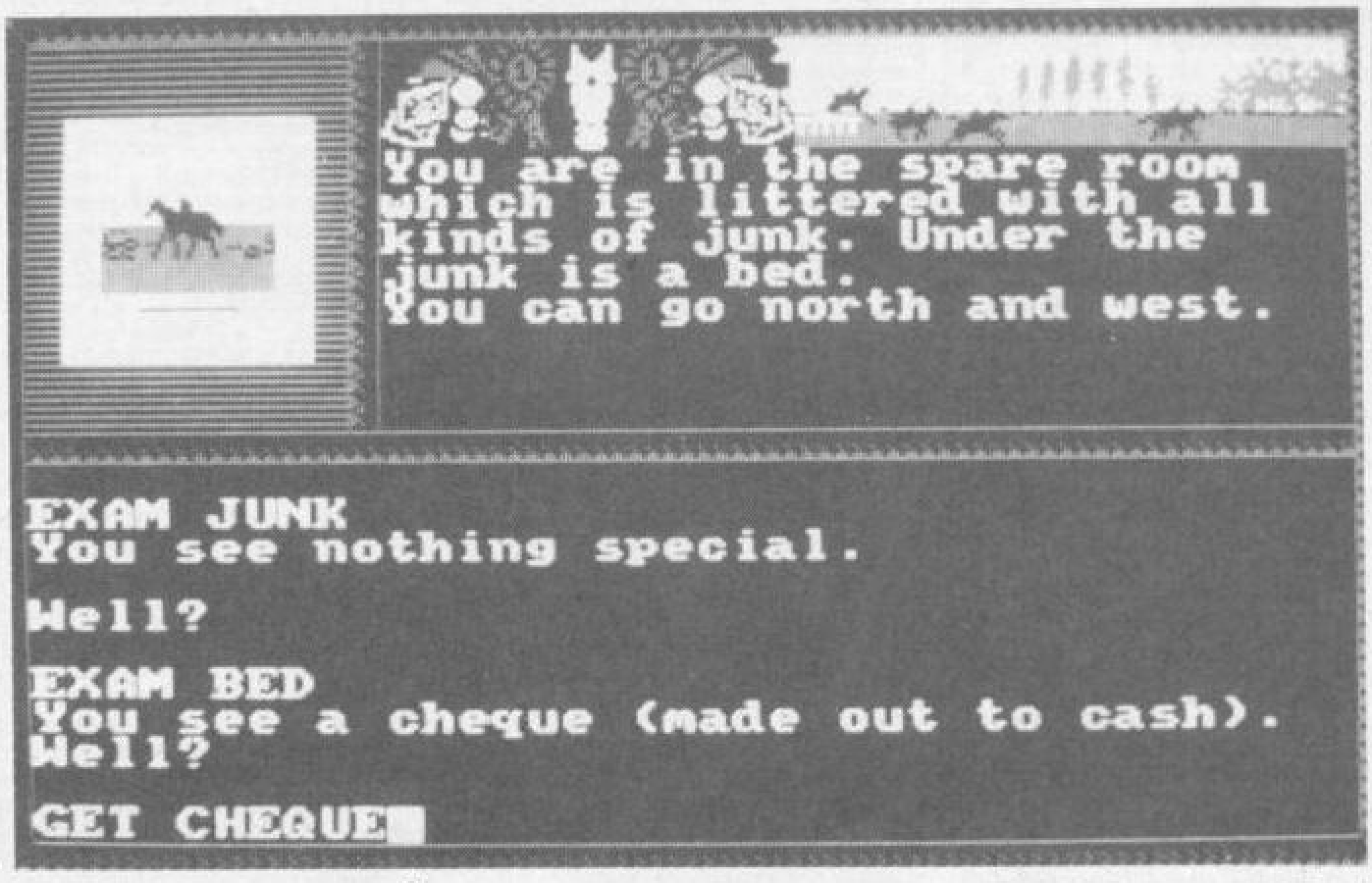
If you are unfortunate enough to run out of petrol, a kindly AA man (what's wrong with the RAC?) will offer to tow you to the nearest garage for £15. At one point I ran out of juice whilst actually at the local garage and still had to pay £15 for a tow. The Garage Hand looked on.

Perhaps I expect things to be too perfect but the Caravan site caused a furrow or two. There you stand outside your car, near the road. The School is to your North with this caravan site to the west of you. On entering the site, you find you can go N,S,E & W — smells of a maze I say to myself — can I get out again? Yes! East takes me back to the road. OK back in again. I'll drop the keys and go North then Redescribe. I obviously haven't moved as the location description is the same one and the keys are still here. However, going East takes me to the caravan site (keys still on the ground) and not to Road. Is this is a magic caravan site where objects dropped follow you around?!

Heading North on the M25 (very unrealistic — no contra flow system) brings you to Welwyn

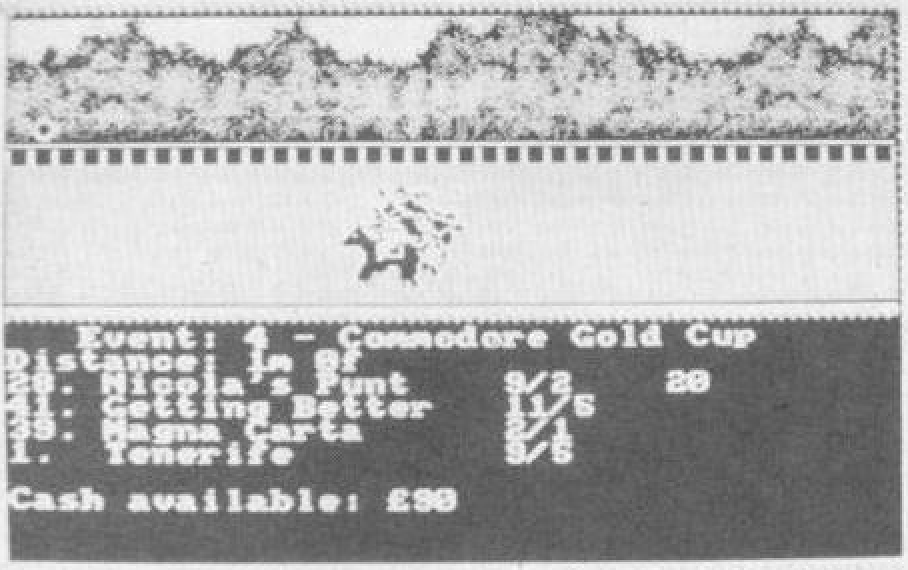


```
You are beside your local
garage. The road here winds
away to the north and
south, and a sign which
squeaks in the wind reads
'OPEN'.
You can go north and south.

LOOK
You see nothing special.

Well?

EXAM PUMP
You see nothing special.

Well?
```



```
You are in the spare room
which is littered with all
kinds of junk. Under the
junk is a bed.
You can go north and west.

EXAM JUNK
You see nothing special.

Well?

EXAM BED
You see a cheque (made out to cash).
Well?

GET CHEQUE
```

▶



```
   Event: 4 - Commodore Gold Cup
Distance: 1m 8f
28. Nicola's Punt        9/2     20
41: Getting Better       11/5
39. Magna Carta          2/1
1.  Tenerife             9/5

Cash available: £90
```

Garden City and the Mansion of Angelo and his sidekick Eddy. The location outside the front door does state that you can go N,S,E and W — I tried and couldn't — no explanations given — just messages such as ''Not now'' and ''Huh?''. ''Knock Door'' allows you entry.

Now, it's alright having other characters around and a parser that accepts communication, but I feel one must be given some idea of what to say to them or else hours of frustration are endured finding the right word. They don't even respond to ''Hello''!!.

I wondered around aimlessly for a few hours — filling up with petrol every now and again and driving the wrong way down the Motorway for a giggle but didn't seem to get anywhere. In the end, I didn't really want to.

I think I'll read the book and then perhaps give it another go.

I loaded side 2 — the racing game! This kept me amused for all of twenty minutes although I would think it will be more interesting if you need to gamble to make money to get further into the adventure itself. I want to tell the joke about the gamblers who systematically put a monkey, and a pony on a horse to win. It lost — there was no room left for the jockey (that'll be edited out!).

Back to the adventure — the screen display is quite attractive. The top third used for graphics and location description with objects, messages and input in the bottom section. Response time is fast and the parser did help me to get nowhere fast.

The message ''You can't'' or ''Huh?'' appeared far to often for my liking. I was in a bathroom with a bath full of water — I would have liked to ''Have bath'' — ''Empty bath'' — ''Pull plug'' and the like — but I couldn't! Seems to be a lack of attention to detail which spoils a potentially nice game.

Ah well, you know what they say ''Once bitten''..... I think he's running in the 3.30.

Atmosphere	35%
Plot	50%
Interaction	38%
Lastability	30%
Value For Money	31%
Overall	37%

KWAH!

Melbourne House, £8.95 cass,

Dusting down the old red Y-fronts and slipping them over my cream jeans, I turn to face the keyboard, charged with super energy after a quick ''KWAH'' and it's Dr. Lee look out!

I didn't play *Redhawk* (KWAH! part 1) nor was I supplied with an inlay card for this adventure so my review was produced with a distinct lack of instruction or background information. However, I did learn a little from the AMTIX! back issues.

Once again (apparently) you take the role of Kevin Oliver, the mild mannered reporter who, armed only with a press pass and tape recorder — oh yes and his alter ego — strives to discover his somewhat misty past. His search takes him outside the gates of Dr Lees's rest and rehabilitation centre which he has to enter in order to confront the dastardly Doctor.

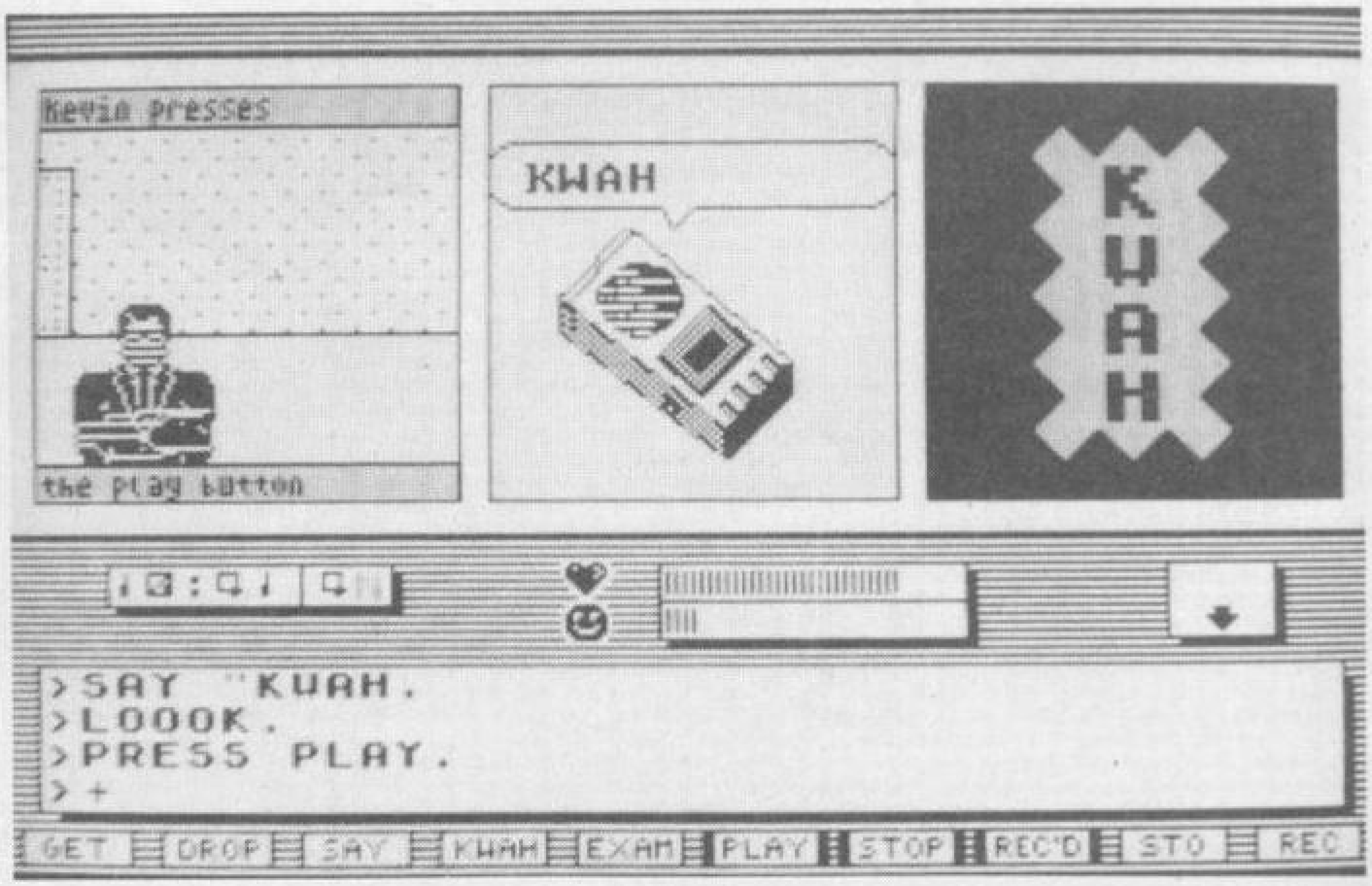
The locked gates should be no problem to anyone with identification, and so on to the Mansion grounds. North is the Reception area where the 'captivating' Dr. Lee will appear OR Down which takes us to the Workshop — from where the only exit is East (strange!). Sort the puzzled guard out and you're free to roam the corridors to discover what you may.

The screen layout is neat, with the three ''picture comic'' squares portraying and updating your every move — graphically. Below this is the clock which ticks on relentlessly (only it doesn't actually tick) and a direction indicator to show possible exits. The lower part of the screen is for your instructions, some of which (say — stop — save — load etc) can be inputted by pressing 'control' and the appropriate numerical digit — a nice time saver.

There is a Ram Save function, restart option, and all the usual goodies that are now expected in a good adventure. Beware the 'Quit Game' command -because this acts as a reset; 'restart' is the command to begin a new game. The parser is good, understanding such sentences as 'North, press record, then drop recorder, East and wait.'' and you can input commands without having to wait for the Graphics to catch up (within reason) the good old multi tasking.

I must admit I was a little lost when I began this game, but after banging my cowled head against the nearest solid object for a while, things began to fall into place. The recorder is very useful and I actually cheered to myself when I conquered the Security door problem — I've not done that in an adventure for a while. A little more information about certain objects and/or characters would have helped — but then it may have become too easy to solve — plus a little tidying up. When in one of the Padded Cells typing 'search padded cell' produces the answer ''What padded cell?''. Also when Rick has the computer tape and you ask him to put it on the spool,' he informs you he 'can't see the tape'. These, and other quirks, are annoying but do not detract too much from the overall game play, which is nicely designed, fast(ish), amusing and very morish. Once I'd got into the idiosyncrasies of the game, I found it nice to play — I shall be playing it again for it's one well worth the pennies.

Atmosphere	68%
Plot	72%
Interaction	67%
Lastability	75%
Value for money	65%
Overall	69%



Kevin presses
the play button

```
>SAY "KWAH.
>LOOOK.
>PRESS PLAY.
> +
```

THE PAWN

Rainbird (Magnetic Scrolls) £24.95 disk, PCW8256

The lovely Anita Sinclair from Magnetic Scrolls came up to Ludlow especially to show me *The Pawn* on the 'Joyce'. Well, I was really impressed . . . and the game was good too!

Now, I wanted to give you a balanced, in depth, critical review of this adventure (something which I may attempt in a minute), meanwhile, if you own a PCW 8256 and want a rest from business type interfacing, go out and get a copy of this game. It's really wonderful!

You begin by being bashed on the head by some unknown party and regaining consciousness on a gravel path in the land of Krovnia. This particular Kingdom is at present, in something of a political upheaval. King Eric has managed to upset many of his subjects by refusing to re-instate the citizenship of the Roobikyoub dwarves following their recent banishment. A certain scheming little chappie, by the name of Gringo, is busy plotting to overthrow the King from the mountainous regions where he and his compatriots are holed up.

Travelling east from the path brings you face to face with the magician Kronos and his famous gliding platform. Kronos is not an easy character to determine - I decided he was a baddie - but as he is obviously more powerful than myself I do what he asks of me..for now.

Your main task is to escape from Kerovnia, but there are so many other characters and little tasks to deal with (if you want to) that one soon becomes completely distracted as you get sucked down into the game. The adventurers' horse, you know.. the one with the Clint Eastwood complex, kept me happy for hours. It conjured up a great image of me riding on the back of this hovering steed (it has no legs, you see, who wears a stetson and poncho and loves to tell you that the Magnum is the world's most powerful handgun etc..Most other characters are at least as interactive as the nag and, if not in immediate danger, you may while away the hours indulged in conversation with them. The Devil, in particular, knows a lot about a lot, but don't dally with him too long or he will revert to his soul purpose in life!

The parser is amazing, managing to deal with ultra complex input such as: "Ask Kronos about the wristband then get chest and go east then east and examine it then drop it and listen to band". This is really quite a naff example, it's much more powerful than shown here, but this gives you the general idea. You can repeat previous commands using the "copy" key and correct or amend input using the normal controls.

A large number of locations are represented graphically and these are great . . . . even on the green screen. You may scroll the pictures up and down, or view them in "dither" (don't ask!) or standard mode, or switch them off completely.

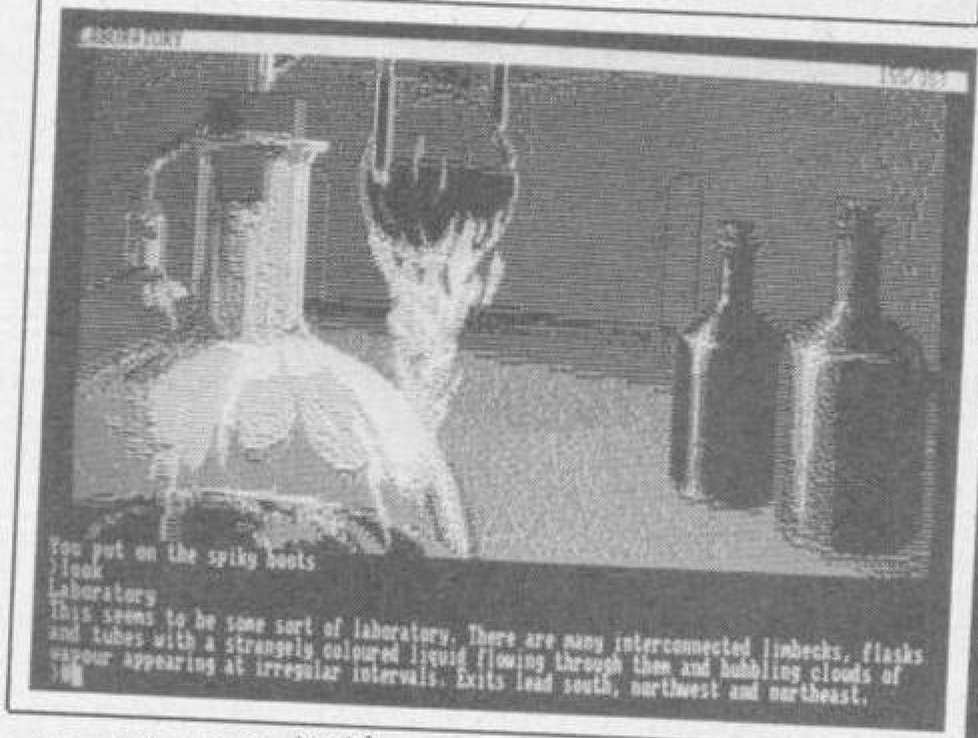
Other controls include: "Verbose!" Room descriptions are given fully every time you enter a room, "Brief":-Room description are given only if "Look" is typed, "Exits":-lists the ways out of your current location (not necessarily your current predicament!) etc etc.. the options are far too many to list here.

The Pawn is a comparative masterpiece. There are obviously one or two hiccups in it, one should understand that with a game of such complexity, for example, typing in "Look shaft" when at the bottom of the ladder gives the reply "which shaft"? The Shaft or the shaft? . . . petty I know and as there are very few other quirks I don't really know why I mentioned them at all.

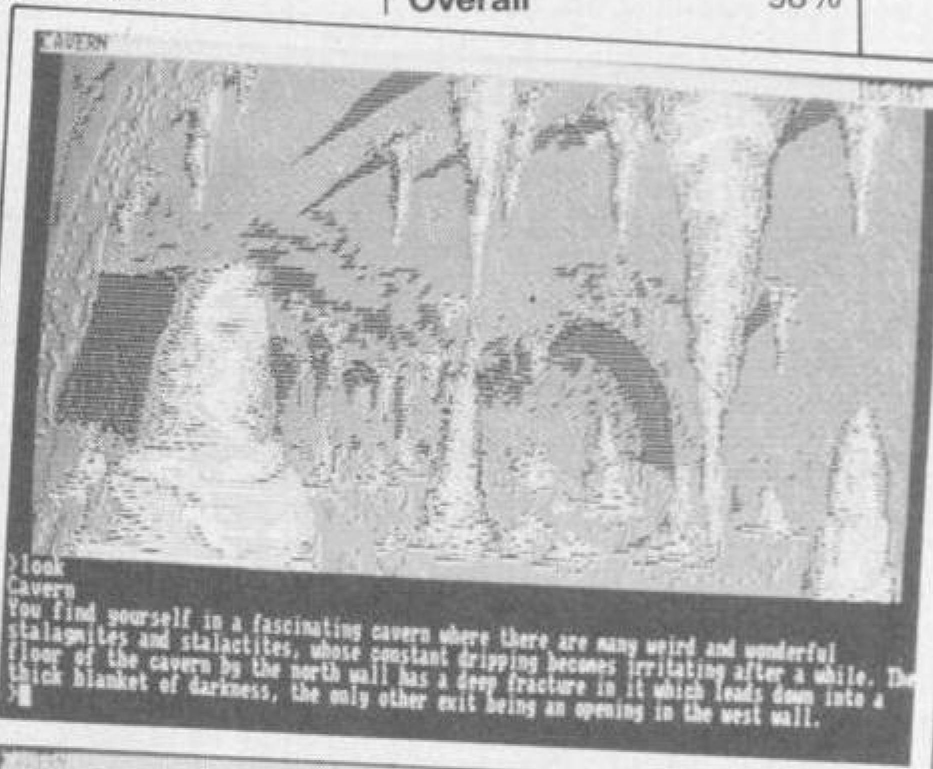
There is usually no one solution to a problem in this game all objects behave much as they would should they really exist. It doesn't have to be the shirt which is tied to the hoe and rake (little clue there!) or even the hoe and rake which need to be attached to each other. The rope may be used along with any other suitable objects to make a lever.

I only had a few hours in Kerovnia, but I want to go back there as soon as possible. Not necessarily to complete the game, just to have another look around, chat to honest John, listen to Jerry Lee Lewis or feel sorry for the snowman. The characters in *The Pawn* live, the plot unfolds step by step and I thoroughly enjoyed being a part of it. The packaging is very good, consisting of a Novella (which needs to be referred to throughout play), full instructions, a map of Kerovnia and a nice box! It has to be the best adventure I have ever played on the Amstrad!

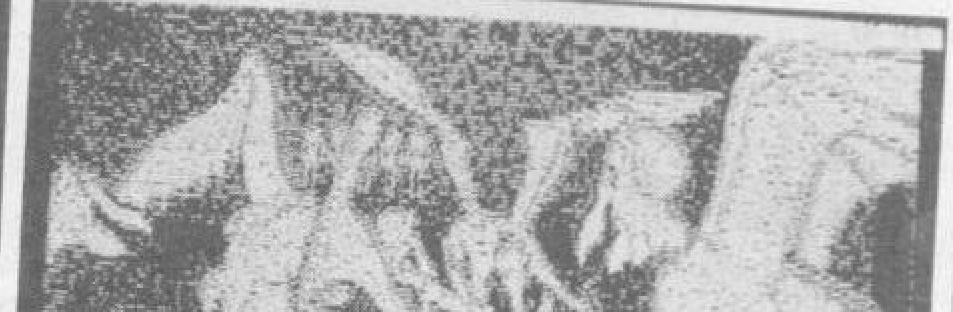
Atmosphere	97%
Plot	98%
Interaction	98%
Lastability	98%
Value for money	97%
Overall	98%



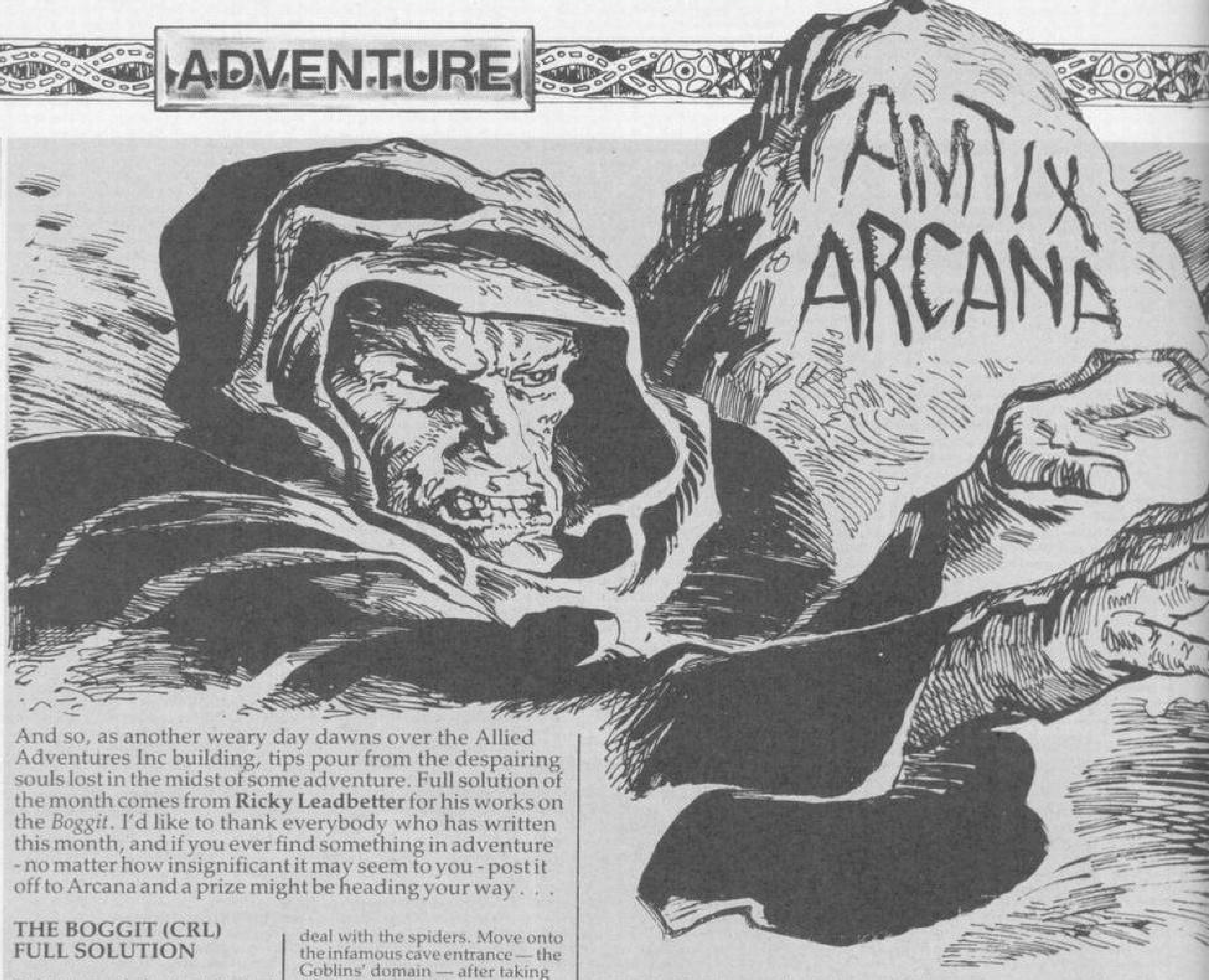
```
You put on the spiky boots
>look
Laboratory
This seems to be some sort of laboratory. There are many interconnected limbecks, flasks
and tubes with a strangely coloured liquid flowing through them and bubbling clouds of
vapour appearing at irregular intervals. Exits lead south, northwest and northeast.
>
```



```
>look
Cavern
You find yourself in a fascinating cavern where there are many weird and wonderful
stalagmites and stalactites, whose constant dripping becomes irritating after a while. Th
floor of the cavern by the north wall has a deep fracture in it which leads down into a
thick blanket of darkness, the only other exit being an opening in the west wall.
>
```



AMTIX! Accolade



And so, as another weary day dawns over the Allied Adventures Inc building, tips pour from the despairing souls lost in the midst of some adventure. Full solution of the month comes from **Ricky Leadbetter** for his works on the *Boggit*. I'd like to thank everybody who has written this month, and if you ever find something in adventure - no matter how insignificant it may seem to you - post it off to Arcana and a prize might be heading your way . . .

THE BOGGIT (CRL) FULL SOLUTION

Delta 4's spoof adventure has had us all in stitches here in the office. However, we didn't really get very far into it (The rest of the mag has to be written at some point). So for all of you struggling with the likes of Faggins and his mates, here's a jolly good solution from Richard Leadbetter of Witham - that well known home to many a Boggit . . .

First wait for Grandalf to come through the window, scoop up the box of choccies and throw them through the window; make sure that they explode. Enter the combination *29 2 85* into the door and it will swing open. Upon departure from Fag End, Grandalf will tell you to Come On Down! The answer to the riddle of the money is *Nothing at all*, whereupon you will be whisked back to the party at Fag End. From here proceed to the trolls clearing. To save poor Bimbo from the Trolls say 'Lux', floodlights will appear and the hideous Trolls will be no more. Climb into their cauldron and pick up He-man's sword; get the key and proceed north to their cave. Open the cave and get the washing line which doubles as a rope.

Now proceed into Rivendell, abode of Smellrond. Enter his toilet and examine the window. This provides a clue on how to deal with the spiders. Move onto the infamous cave entrance — the Goblins' domain — after taking the cigarette, credit card and the security card. Save your data to part two where you will appear in the Goblin's Dungeon. Dig at the sand, break the trapdoor and collect the cash and the torch. Examine the torch and the battery and insert them into your trusty sword which will then begin to glow. To leave the dungeon, throw the rope — then pull on it. Amble around the domain looking for a large egg and a small ring. With these items find the exit. If you are unable to find it then cheat: type **Delta 4**, you'll then be transported to their HQ— room 101. After this, type *Boggit* to return to the main game.

Go up, the Goblins will give chase. Make sure you have the egg, as this will give you a free ride on the TWA Eagle. After a while you'll be deposited in Part 3.

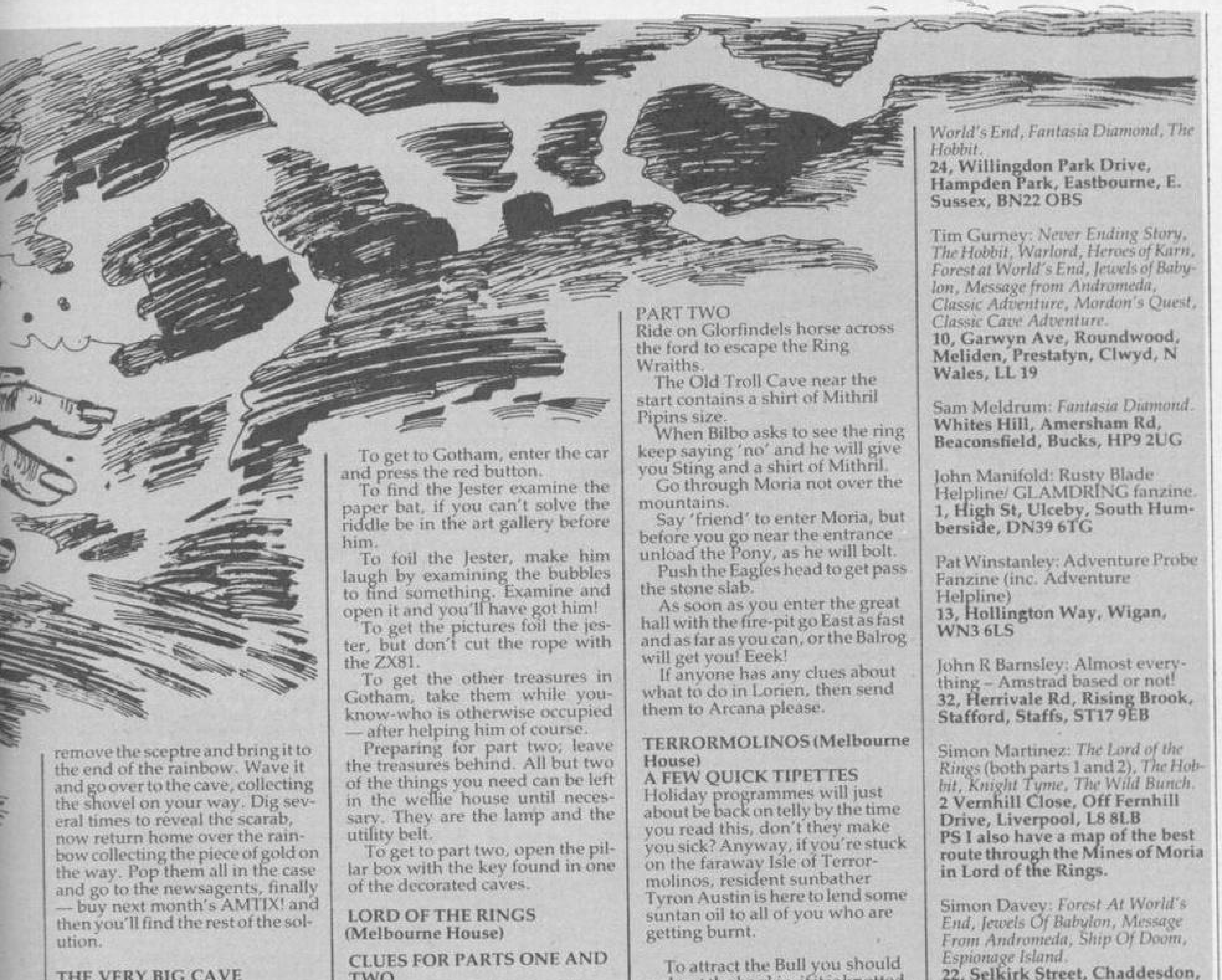
Move south along the forest road, slaying the Beholder with your cigarette. Move south to the forest road to get to the Nocromancers mental hospital, insert the security card to meet Drain — Thorny's Dad. Untie him, and get his curious key. Go back and find the wooden Elf. Get captured and find the Butler, climb into the barrel, make a note to drink the wine and then go to Flake Town. Drop the curious key and the duty free, get the bow and the arrow. Drop the Goblin's cash near the bird with the notice. Travel to the Dragon's Mountain. To kill the fiery one you must *Shoot tail*. Here comes the hard bit — retrace your steps all the way back to Fag End and climb into the chest. You'll then be confronted with the congratulation message. Hooray!

ZORK ONE (Infocom) HALF A SOLUTION

Still struggling with the ultimate cave adventure? Never fear, Reginald Graham from the Gaelic hamlet of County Antrim has come up with rather a jolly good one. Although he did send us the full solution, I'm going to be horrible and only print half of it. The complete version will follow next month. Honest.

First get the egg out of the tree, north of the house. Then enter the house via the Eastern window. The case can be used to store your treasures, the rug must be moved to locate the trapdoor. Firstly place the egg in the case, and go down the trapdoor carrying the lamp, then head off in a Southerly direction into the gallery to collect your painting, go North and upwards to deposit the painting in the case. Now you are prepared to gather up the sword and beat the troll into the next world. With this done you can go back to the house, deposit the sword and collect the egg.

Enter the maze and go W,W,W,UP — collect the bag of gold and go SW,E,S,SE and you should end up near a Cyclops. Say "ODYSSEUS" — alternatively you can give him your lunch and drink. Drop the egg and return to the house via the newly formed tunnel. Collect the rope and proceed east from the troll room to the round room, then SE and E where you get to use the rope to climb down. Leave the torch and proceed S to collect the bell, the candles and the book. Put the candles in the sack (You haven't forgotten it have you?) and go down twice. Now ring the bell, take the candles out of the bag and read the book to exorcise the Ghosts. Now you can get the crystal skull to bring it back to the house. Go to the dam and press the yellow button while bringing the wrench to turn the bolt. Now go to the edge of the reservoir, and collect the chest and the trident on your way North to the slide room. D and U to enter the house. Now return via the round room to collect the torch and then pop into the Egyptian tomb to get the offering. Go to the altar and pray to return near home. Deposit these treasures in the chest. Open the coffin,



remove the sceptre and bring it to the end of the rainbow. Wave it and go over to the cave, collecting the shovel on your way. Dig several times to reveal the scarab, now return home over the rainbow collecting the piece of gold on the way. Pop them all in the case and go to the newsagents, finally — buy next month's AMTIX! and then you'll find the rest of the solution.

THE VERY BIG CAVE ADVENTURE (CRL)

HINTS FOR PART ONE

Those nice young ladies from the school for upwardly mobile girls have been very helpful in supplying some rather useful hints for their *Very Big Cave Adventure*. So, before you can say ''Jolly hockey sticks!'' here's some bits and boobs for part one — part two will follow next month.

To get the penny say 'No' to the bull.

To enter the brick building you must insert the penny in the slot.

To leave the brick building use the spring but don't drop the bomb.

To pass the Bull, throw the bomb but don't drop it!

To go south into the gully wear the wellies.

To avoid sploosh holes light the lamp.

To pass the python, open the can but don't feed the bird.

To cross the chasm, drop the log but don't wave the black rod.

To defeat the space invaders keep moving and firing, be patient but don't stay at the edges.

To get to Gotham, enter the car and press the red button.

To find the Jester examine the paper bat, if you can't solve the riddle be in the art gallery before him.

To foil the Jester, make him laugh by examining the bubbles to find something. Examine and open it and you'll have got him!

To get the pictures foil the jester, but don't cut the rope with the ZX81.

To get the other treasures in Gotham, take them while you-know-who is otherwise occupied — after helping him of course.

Preparing for part two; leave the treasures behind. All but two of the things you need can be left in the wellie house until necessary. They are the lamp and the utility belt.

To get to part two, open the pillar box with the key found in one of the decorated caves.

LORD OF THE RINGS (Melbourne House)

CLUES FOR PARTS ONE AND TWO

Edmund Farrow from Beccles in Suffolk, a veritable Hobbit if ever I saw one, has been busily beavering away to bring you timid types a few clues 'n' tips for getting a bit further into the dark lands of Mordor.

PART ONE

If Frodo goes alone to the Barrowight, he can take any three of the swords, wear the ring and get past it.

Keep trying to kill the Green Knight with the sword and he will give you the medallion. Take the green medallion to the Red lady and kill her, then take the Golden Medallion. Take the medallions to the Monk and wait for Radagast outside the observatory, he will tell you how to use the jewels.

Leave the ring behind, and go about bashing ring-wraiths with the swords and vaporising them with the eleven Jewels.

If Merry swims in the lake he will be given two jewels.

Tom Bombadill will stop the Willow Tree from attacking and you can take the green glow . . .

PART TWO

Ride on Glorfindels horse across the ford to escape the Ring Wraiths.

The Old Troll Cave near the start contains a shirt of Mithril Pipins size.

When Bilbo asks to see the ring keep saying 'no' and he will give you Sting and a shirt of Mithril.

Go through Moria not over the mountains.

Say 'friend' to enter Moria, but before you go near the entrance unload the Pony, as he will bolt.

Push the Eagles head to get pass the stone slab.

As soon as you enter the great hall with the fire-pit go East as fast and as far as you can, or the Balrog will get you! Eeek!

If anyone has any clues about what to do in Lorien, then send them to Arcana please.

TERRORMOLINOS (Melbourne House)

A FEW QUICK TIPETTES

Holiday programmes will just about be back on telly by the time you read this, don't they make you sick? Anyway, if you're stuck on the faraway Isle of Terrormolinos, resident sunbather Tyron Austin is here to lend some suntan oil to all of you who are getting burnt.

To attract the Bull you should unknot the hankie, if it is knotted, then wave it.

To stop the shaving foam from blowing up don't take it.

When out of the Bull-Ring, head in a roughly Eastward direction.

ALLIED ADVENTURERS INC.

Fairlight, *Dun Darach*.
15 Seventh Avenue, Garston Park, Reading, Berkshire.

Roy Alexander: *Lords of Time*, *Colossal Adventure*, *Heroes of Karn*, *Forest at World's End*, *Message from Andromeda*, *Subsunk*, *Gremlins* – complete. Help on *Spellbound*, *Robin of Sherwood*.
43, Denmark Rd, Poole, Dorset, BH15 2DE

J Lycett: *Return to Eden*, *Emerald Isle*, *Jewels of Babylon*, *Forest at World's End*, *Fantasia Diamond*, *The Hobbit*.
24, Willingdon Park Drive, Hampden Park, Eastbourne, E. Sussex, BN22 OBS

Tim Gurney: *Never Ending Story*, *The Hobbit*, *Warlord*, *Heroes of Karn*, *Forest at World's End*, *Jewels of Babylon*, *Message from Andromeda*, *Classic Adventure*, *Mordon's Quest*, *Classic Cave Adventure*.
10, Garwyn Ave, Roundwood, Meliden, Prestatyn, Clwyd, N Wales, LL 19

Sam Meldrum: *Fantasia Diamond*.
Whites Hill, Amersham Rd, Beaconsfield, Bucks, HP9 2UG

John Manifold: Rusty Blade Helpline/ GLAMDRING fanzine.
1, High St, Ulceby, South Humberside, DN39 6TG

Pat Winstanley: Adventure Probe Fanzine (inc. Adventure Helpline)
13, Hollington Way, Wigan, WN3 6LS

John R Barnsley: Almost everything – Amstrad based or not!
32, Herrivale Rd, Rising Brook, Stafford, Staffs, ST17 9EB

Simon Martinez: *The Lord of the Rings* (both parts 1 and 2), *The Hobbit*, *Knight Tyme*, *The Wild Bunch*.
2 Vernhill Close, Off Fernhill Drive, Liverpool, L8 8LB
PS I also have a map of the best route through the Mines of Moria in Lord of the Rings.

Simon Davey: *Forest At World's End*, *Jewels Of Babylon*, *Message From Andromeda*, *Ship Of Doom*, *Espionage Island*.
22, Selkirk Street, Chaddesdon, Derby, DE2 6GL.
Need help on *Hunchback – The Adventure* and *Knight Tyme*.

Simon Marshall: *Lords Of Time*, *Heroes Of Karn*, *Message From Andromeda*, *Mindshadow*, *Red Moon*, *Jewels Of Babylon*.
23 Springfield Way, Stockton Lane, York, YO3 OHN (Tel 424008)

PLEASE always remember to send an SAE!

If you want to be added to the list, just write in and tell me which games you can help with, and remember to give your full name and address. Of course, any useful tips you land in my lap could win you twenty pounds worth of Amstrad software!

Yeuch! It's pouring with rain outside and I'm cold wet and hungry. Space is at an end so the door closes on the Allied Adventures Inc. building. As usual, tips and (for the cartographic amongst you) maps would be appreciated. Send your wafflings to ROB STEEL, ALLIED ADVENTURERS INC., AMTIX!, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB.

TOP TWENTY FOR FEBRUARY

Here we go again, the Top 20 as decided by our own groupie AMTIX! readers. The figures in brackets are last month's positions.

YOUR VOTE COULD WIN YOU £40 OF SOFTWARE

Every month us generous types here at AMTIX! Towers will be awarding the grand sum of £40 worth of software to the lucky reader whose form is drawn from Uncle Malcolm's toupee (sorry Crumbly). In addition the next four readers' forms drawn will have their very own AMTIX! T Shirts and hats to love and to cherish.

This month the lucky reader who wins the £40 of software is **Terry Schofield** of Caversham, Reading RG4 0DJ. T Shirts and hats will soon be winging their way to **Glyn Davis** of Gosforth, Newcastle on Tyne NE3 4RP, **Rory Clarke** of East Farleigh, Maidstone ME16 0PR, **Stuart**

1 *(6)* **ELITE** Firebird

2 *(2)* **GREEN BERET** Imagine

3 *(1)* **SPINDIZZY** Electric Dreams

4 *(4)* **BATMAN** Ocean

5 *(3)* **YIE AR KUNG FU** Imagine

6 *(16)* **GHOSTS 'N' GOBLINS** Elite

7 *(7)* **GET DEXTER** PSS/ERE

8 *(9)* **KNIGHT TYME** Mastertronic Added Dimension

9 *(5)* **JACK THE NIPPER** Gremlin Graphics

10 *(8)* **COMMANDO** Elite

11 *(15)* **HARVEY HEADBANGER** Firebird

12 *(20)* **SPELLBOUND** Mastertronic Added Dimension

13 *(12)* **WINTER GAMES** Epyx

14 *(-)* **WHO DARES WINS II** Alligata

15 *(14)* **WAY OF THE EXPLODING FIST** Melbourne House

16 *(20)* **KUNG FU MASTER** US Gold

17 *(-)* **IKARI WARRIORS** Elite

18 *(-)* **LIGHTFORCE** FTL

19 *(17)* **SORCERY PLUS** Amsoft

20 *(-)* **CAULDRON I** Palace

TOP TWENTY TWITTERS

Once again a very big THANKS to all of you AMTIX! groupies who voted again this month, we don't mind if you don't agree with our joystick junkies. That's what democracy is all about – people arguing, disagreeing and fighting amongst themselves all the time! Keep your forms rolling in, that's very important if the chart is to be truly representative.

It did not take long for that old favourite *Elite* to take over the number one spot again, replacing *Spindizzy* from **Electric Dreams**.

There are three new entries this month, including one of our Accolades, *Ikari Warriors* from **Elite**, *Lightforce* from **FTL**, and *Cauldron II* from **Palace**. There are also two re-entries, *Who dares Wins II* from **Alligata**, and *Kung Fu Master* from **US Gold**.

Remember it's most important to fill in your scores, if you want a mention in the new regular Saffron's Scoreboard feature. Do fill in all the form, we noticed some people have been skipping bits, now that's very naughty, so fill in all of it, y'hear or Saffron will sort you out with her brollie.

Latham of Newton Aycliffe, County Durham DL5 7DL, and **Simon Martinez** of Liverpool L8 8LB.

Well done you lot and could you all write to Auntie Julie Yaxley, our new competitions secretary at AMTIX! Towers, 1/2 King Street, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1AQ stating your chest sizes for the T-Shirts as soon as possible please. In this issue we are publishing a new form for you to complete. Please ensure you fill it all in.

Remember, voting is simplicity itself and will only cost you the price of a stamp. Just fill in the form, all of it, and list your five favourite games in descending order with the best at number one. If you don't want to cut up your precious copy of AMTIX! write all the details on to a postcard or the back of an envelope, or you can always photocopy the form. Whatever you do, do it right! Please!

AMTIX! READERS TOP TWENTY CHART VOTING FORM

Please write in CAPS in an eyestrain free manner for Crumbly's benefit.

Name ....

Address ....

....

....

Postcode ....

The World's five hippest games in order of preference are:
TITLE

1 ....

2 ....

3 ....

4 ....

5 ....

From one of the five games above select one and give us your high score:

TITLE ....

SCORE ....

My machine is a 464/664/6128/8256 (delete as applicable)

If I am lucky enough to win the top prize of £40 of software vouchers the games I would like are as follows. Please state if you want cassette or disk versions.

THE GAMES I WOULD LIKE ARE: ....

....

....

....

If I am lucky enough to win a T Shirt my chest size is SMALL, MEDIUM, LARGE (circle the appropriate size)

Send your coupon to:

AMTIX! TOP TWENTY, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB

SAFFRON'S SCOREBOARD

Hello and welcome to Reader's Ego Corner volume XI. I must say thanks to everyone who has taken the trouble to send the scores in – without you this space would be blank. Feast your eyes below and if you're not there send your score in, even if you are there I want to here from you again. Entries to, SAFFRON'S SCOREBOARD, AMTIX!, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE. SY8 1DB. See ya next month.

BATMAN (Ocean)
9,102 Robert Lane, Mansfield
8,264 Luigi Antonioni, London

CAULDRON II (Palace)
Completed Richard Hewitt, Stoke on Trent
9,700 Mark Cleland, Motherwell
24,700 Daniel Webster, Buckingham

COMMANDO (Elite)
192,290 Matthew Ross, Wokingham
128,080 Michael Stirling, West Ferry

DAN DARE (Virgin Games)
Completed (And shot Mekon!) Mass Valducci, AMTIX! Towers
Completed Neil Graham, London
294,380 Daniel Webster, Buckingham

ELITE (Firebird)
655,359,999 Tony Clarke, AMTIX! Towers
49,692,192 Credits Andrew Mpouzer
49,1449 Credits Ewan Mains, Hamilton

FIFTH AXIS (Loriciels)
99%, Shane Gilmartin, Malahide
86%, Saffron Trevaskis, AMTIX! Towers

GAUNTLET (US Gold)
271,164 Julian Rignall, Ludlow
102,988 Tony Clarke, Ludlow

GET DEXTER (PSS/ERE)
304,100 Mark Cleland, Motherwell
248,500 Luigi Antonioni, London
146,000 Gary the Gnome, Dalton-in-furness

GHOSTS AND GOBLINS (Elite)
268,480 Paul Jolleys, Wigan
174,320 Jamie Ford, Plymouth
170,000 Jonathon Cale, Exeter

GREEN BERET (Imagine)
1,164,680 Paul Jolleys, Wigan
351,900 Sunil Hirani, Acton
164,580 David Edwards,Stockton-On-Tees

HARVEY HEADBANGER (Firebird)
99 - 0, John Lloyd, Market harbrough

IKARI WARRIORS (Elite)
10,995,500 Mark Chapell, Northorpe
1,134,200 Andy Sumner, Kingswood

KNIGHT GAMES (English Software)
50,000 St. John Bird, Fakenham

KNIGHT TYME (Mastertronic)
100% Richard Hewitt, Stoke on Trent

KUNG FU MASTER (US Gold)
356,300 Jason Atkinson, Chorley
166,900 Sarfraz Afzal, Doonfoot
142,300 Jonathon Agha South Norwood

LIGHTFORCE (FTL)
327,500 Mark Chapell, Northorpe
8,650 Robert Lane, Mansfield

SORCERY (Amsoft)
100% Completed, Tony Clarke, AMTIX! Towers
133,095 Bryan Hart, Chalgrove
106,447 David Rowland, Kilmarnock

SPY vs SPY (Beyond)
Completed, Mark Wilson, Rochester

SPINDIZZY (Electric Dreams)
106 Jewels Andre Page, Bristol
396,950 Maurice Bowness, Merseyside
243,248 Antony Power, Bognor Regis

STARQUAKE (Bubble Bus)
92% Luigi Antonioni
90% D Deeley, Warwick

STARSTRIKE TWO (Realtime)
1,198,600 Paul Selvidge, Chatham
145,000 Gary Marshall, Swanwick
1,409,600 Paul Jolleys, Wigan

THRUST (Firebird)
86,550 Craig Thompson, Motherwell
58,600 Sunhil Hirani, Acton
16,750 Daniel Webster, Buckingham

TEMPEST (Electric Dreams)
49,129 Neil Faulkner, Watford

WHO DARES WINS II (Alligata)
998,560 Sohail Akram, Rochdale
579,700 Mark Lloyd, Co Kildare
545,660 Jije Apted, Wembley

YIE AR KUNG FU (Imagine)
62,520,630 Luigi Antonioni, London
7,152,350 Jije Apted, Wembley
1,233,440 Ian Kirby, Barking

Saffron
Trevaskis

FIND THE MYSTERY WORDS WITH AN ORIENTAL FLAVOUR

Your chance to win Avenger T Shirts, sets of Avenger books and copies of the game, courtesy of Gremlin Graphics.

Gremlin Graphics are no shy wallflowers when it comes to games and they don't hold back when they offer you prizes for competitions either. With their latest release *Avenger*, Uncle Ian Stewart and Auntie 'gorgeous pouting' Sue Quinn are stomping up the very trendy and heavily yellow Avenger T shirts, sets of three adventure books and copies of their excellent game.

Avenger follows the progress of a highly trained ninja whose foster father has been killed by the Demon Grand Master of Flame. You take him through Quench Heart Keep, the action viewed from above in the very best of *Gauntlet* style, and must locate and kill the three Guardians who live there and return three scrolls stolen from your patron the God Kwon. It's not easy as all sorts of nasties live there and the floors all seem to be alive so great care has to be taken.

Lots of care must also be taken as you walk the long, winding corridors of AMTIX! Towers, as various traps are located throughout the building that can mean serious discomfort to the careless infiltrator.

On Editorial floor, there are many traps to keep out unwanted visitors especially when there is no guard Liddon to frighten intruders away. Cameron's flashguns can light up many a dark hidey hole and a full frontal blast from his 1000Kw studio lights could make a person temporarily blind!

Saffron's new, industrial strength, sports brolly can provide shelter for up to six people and broken limbs for anyone unfortunate enough to be on the receiving end of one of her vicious swings, and if you couple that with one of her icey glares – known to chill to the marrow at 20 feet – you have a superb deterrent.

The floor here seems to be alive too! There are some very dodgy floor boards on the way to the tea room and if they are removed you can actually see into the stockroom of the Victoria Wine store which is situated just below us. Malcolm spends a lot of time with the floor boards up trying to fish for drinks using long pieces of string and bent hooks. Sometimes when he returns from his endeavours, he can barely stand due to the effort he puts in. He really enjoys his fishing work!

Ah, but once again I digress dear readers. All you really want to know is what you must do in order to enter the competition. Such is the rich tapestry of life here at the Towers that I feel I have to unravel a few of its secrets from time to time.

Anyway, five first prizes of the three adventure books, an Avenger T shirt and a copy of the game are on offer here as are ten runner up prizes of the set of Avenger, Usurper and Assassin adventure books. What you must do is to answer each of the seven questions below correctly - each answer begins with one of letters of GREMLIN. Then fill in your name and address and T shirt size and post the whole kit and caboodle off to **AVENGER Competition, AMTIX! Towers, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB** and make sure it arrives here by the 5th February.

QUESTIONS

Kwon is very definitely one of these.

An Oriental farming implement with a lot of stick!

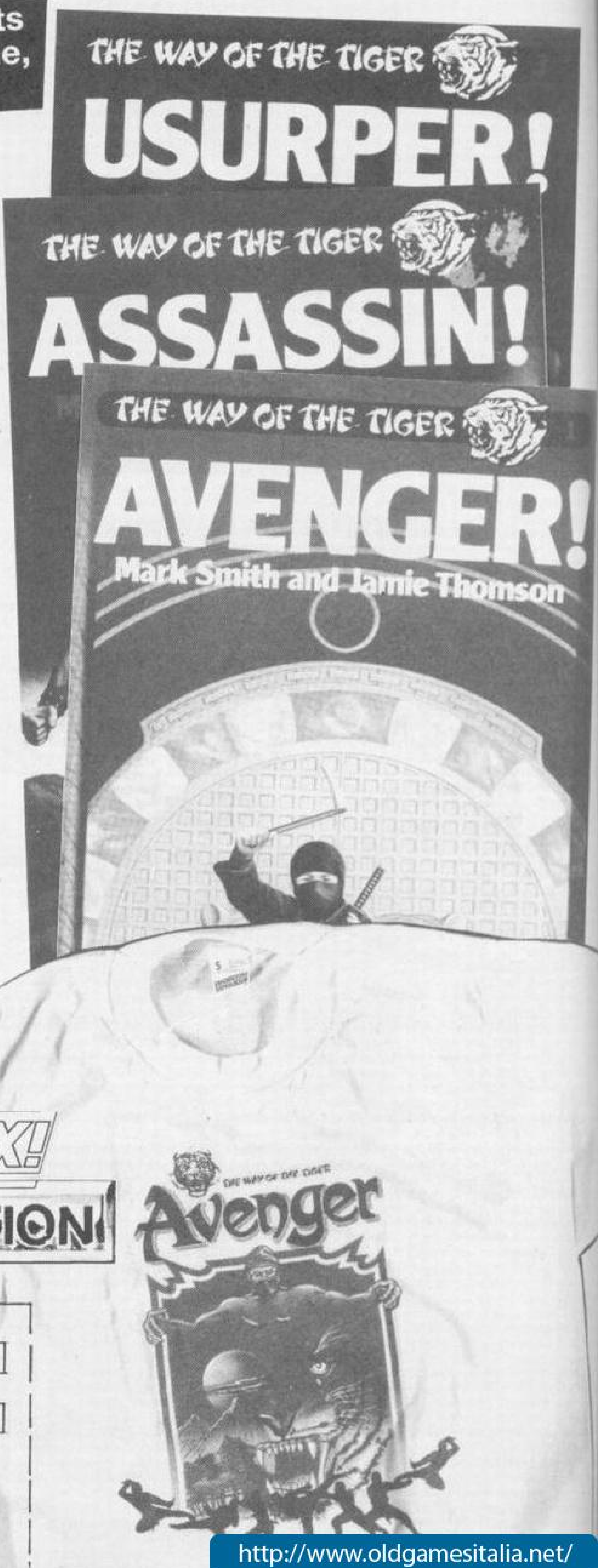
A Chinese meal that comes (usually) in a bag.

What Ninjas are trained in!

A choral seat that tastes great in a cup.

A judo throw that leaves you flat on your back.

In Avenger, you are one of these.



AMTIX!
COMPETITION

G
R
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N

Name ....

Address ....

....

Post code ....

T Shirt size Small Medium Large
(circle your size)

BOUNDER

Gremlin Graphics, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

Platform games have taken a new twist as *Bounder* is one with a difference. Unlike traditional platform games, Bounder is played from a bird's eye view. The object is quite simple, just try and guide a rather vibrant bouncing tennis ball through ten tortuous courses, avoiding all manner of hazards along the way. Each course consists of an arrangement of platforms on which you guide the ball, for if you miss it, it will land on the various wastelands far below. The ball moves in and out of the screen to give the effect that it is in fact bouncing up and down.

Forgetting the great version on the CPC, which was much better, BOUNDER on the PCW is one of the best games ever to grace its green screen. I was disappointed with the scrolling which could have been perfect, by virtue of certain abilities of the PCW which are too long winded to speak of here. I have always found BOUNDER a hard game to play and this version was just as hard for me, but for my money BOUNDER is one of the most enjoyable games on the PCW to date.

Tony

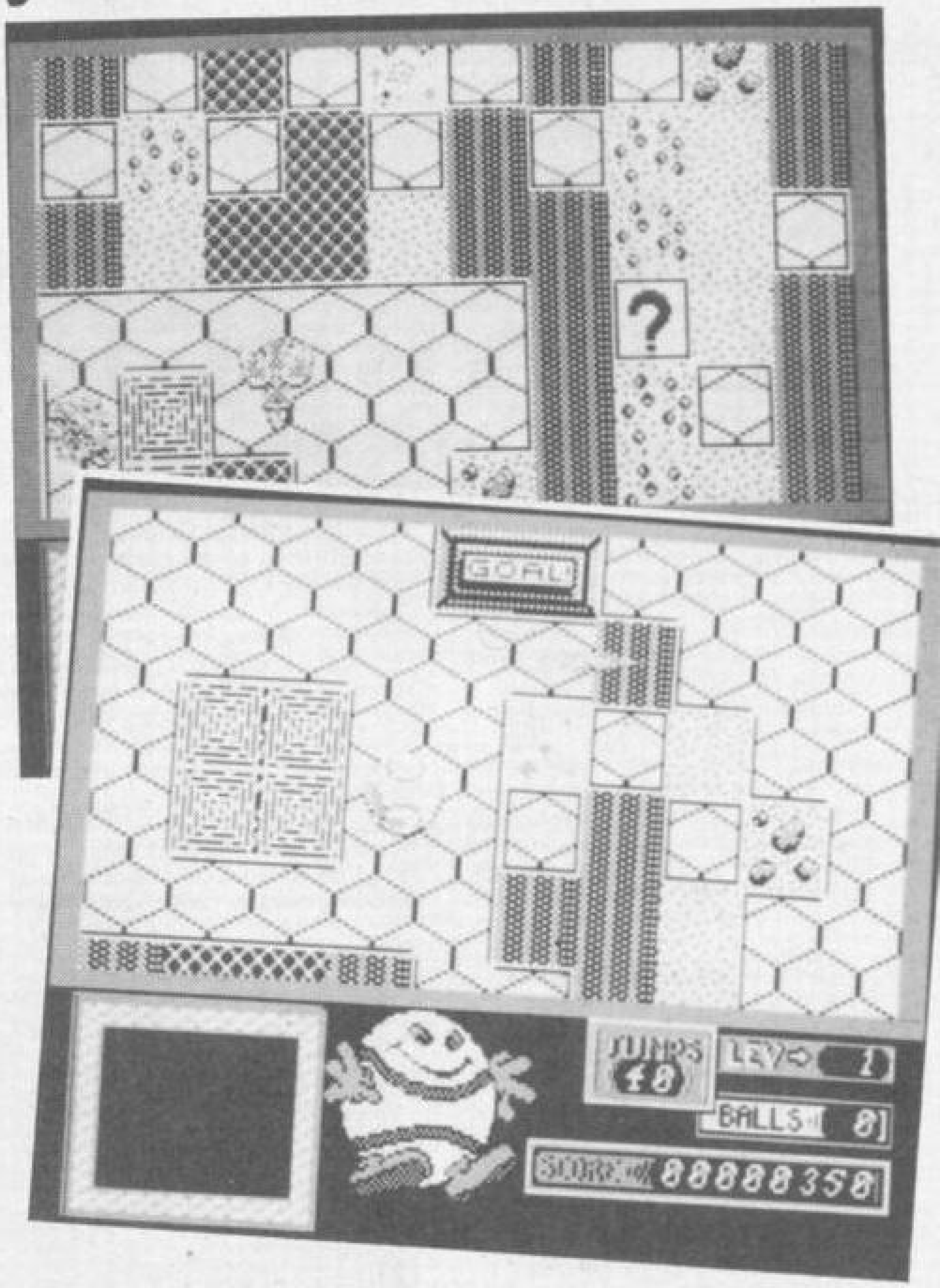
Most obstacles encountered throughout the various levels can be jumped with relative ease but some need just that little extra boost. So to help you get over these there are blocks with arrows, strategically placed, to give that added push. Catapults are more powerful than arrows but are only found on later levels along with disappearing platforms that must be jumped on with caution and teleport pads that take the ball further into that level. Moving platforms are also found on later levels. Of course it's not just a case of leaping around for there is a fair share of nasties to be avoided as well. These come in the forms of bat-like creatures, jet propelled fish and flies to list a few. There is also a selection of devious traps that must obviously be also avoided on your sproingy travels.

I was a firm fan of BOUNDER on the CPC but the conversion onto the Joyce has been a bit of a disappointment. The graphics are a bit bland and with such a fast action game – there's just not enough contrast between the safe and the dangerous squares. Added to that the scroll is a bit dubious as it has a tendency to flicker on occasions. If you've never played BOUNDER before in any of its various formats then give this a whirl but if you have, avoid this one, you've been spoilt.

Richard

Other hazards include impassable walls which must be jumped around and mines that explode into deadly pieces. Fans can blow the ball off course and can prove useful as well, while spinning sticks are definitely a pain.

To make life a trifle easier there are plenty of question marks along the way which when landed on can give extra lives, jumps or points. Occasionally you may find yourself being nashed by a pair of nasty teeth or quished by a couple of boxing gloves. As you progress through the levels the courses become longer are more treacherous and incorporate such things as dead ends and mazes of impassible walls and an increasing number of nasties to suit. At the end of each course there is a bonus screen. On this screen you will find several question marks dotted about and you must try and land on as many as possible before your jumps run out. Should you successfully land on all the question marks you are awarded a bonus of 10,000 points along with the standard 10,000 points for completing the level. Then it's onto the next level with even more hassle.



Like most games converted onto the Joyce BOUNDER has retained all of its features and the gameplay with all its traps and nasties is, to my knowledge, exactly the same. The graphics are reasonable although the ball does tend to flicker around a bit as does the scrolling. The movement ball seems to be smoother forwards than backwards. For me playing it on a green screen is just not the same as I feel it loses a lot of its appeal without colour. Still a very enjoyable game to play but for the price I'd prefer to buy the original.

Mass

Presentation 88%
Bizarre scenario, clear instructions.

Graphics 85%
Good, but loses something because of the lack of colour.

Sound 25%
Bleep.

Playability 88%
Still quite enjoyable.

Addictive Qualities 85%
Fast, bordering on the addictive.

Value for Money 80%
Worth it for such a cult game.

Overall 86%
Still good but not quite the same.

SCRABBLE

Leisure Genius, £14.95 disk, keys

Leisure Genius have had quite a ball with their *Scrabble* game and is now comes into the growing collection of Joyce games. Scrabble identically follows the board game, which for the sake of argument, won't be described as you're all obviously well versed with it.

Having booted up the disk the screen asks if you would like to resume a game previously saved out. Handy if you're playing and Eastenders starts. However, only one game can be stored on disk at a time, so for each additional game other disks will be needed. From there the standard inputs must be entered such as the players names and whether you want a computer opponent – up to four can be entered. When ready the screen shows the standard scrabble board; running down the right hand side the players letter racks. The current player's is shown at the top, as well as a larger version displayed below the board.

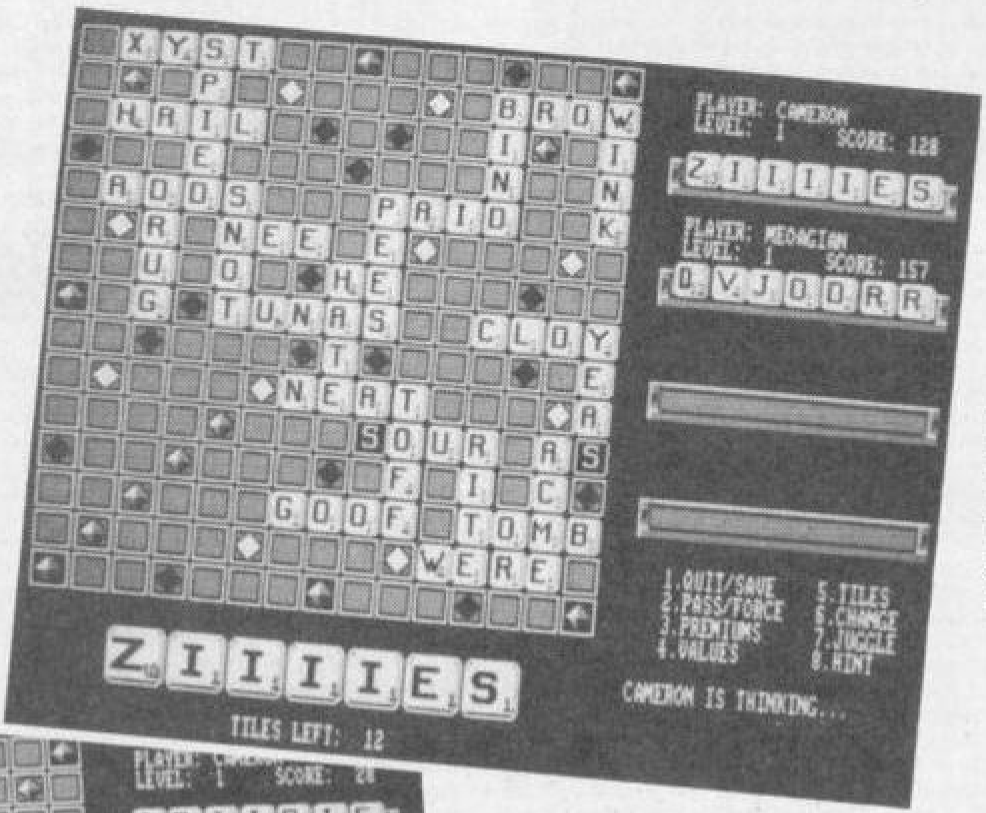
To play, the computer will first issue a prompt for you to enter your word made up from a selection of letters from the rack. The computer knows 20,000 words, but if you come up with an answer that it has not already catalogued it will ask if the word is genuine. If answered 'yes' then you may proceed to place your word on the board. This is achieved by moving the cursor to the square where you wish the game to begin and then pressing either 'a' for the word to be displayed across or 'd' for down. After the selected word has been correctly placed on the board the computer will add the score to the total.

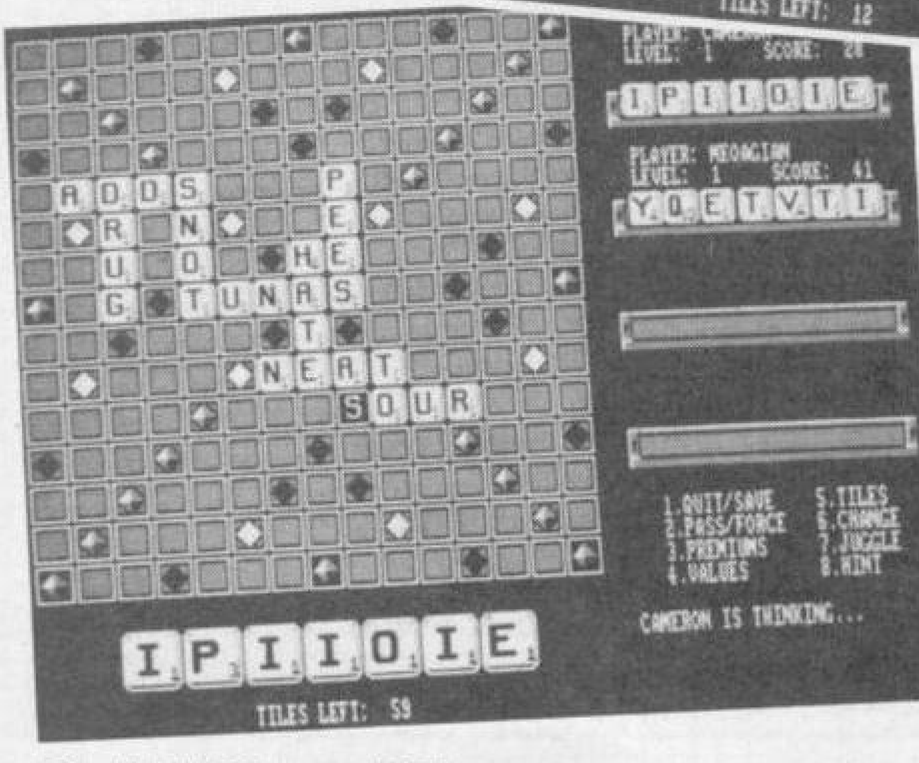
If you can't think of a word from the collection of letters on the rack then by pressing the '8' key the computer will do its best to come up with the highest scoring word possible. It is then up to you to place it correctly on the board. Other options available are juggling the letters on the rack, pass the turn, display the complete values of the tiles, change a tile and the amount of tiles still left in play.

A fair bit of honesty is required on the a player's part for if he or she types in a word that the computer doesn't recognise it will ask if it is correct and if you say yes it will accept it. You can easily cheat. The graphics are very clear and well defined, the instructions are simple and if you get stuck you can get the computer to help you. SCRABBLE on the Joyce does wonders for the traditional game.
Mass

To be honest I am not one of the world's great SCRABBLE players, but I do know a bit about the game, and in my opinion you couldn't hope for a better conversion. One thing that was missing from the game was the ability to increase the dictionary of words that it knows and so stop the messages saying that the program doesn't know a word when it has been used for the third time.
Tony

Once again, here's one of those games that are so much better on the Joyce. With the precision of the fine pixels everything is laid out in a clear fashion and so there is no confusion about what is happening at all. The game is enjoyable as always and with the addition of the help mode it makes it a great pleasure to play. What appeal this will have I can't guess but it deserves to do well.
Richard


PLAYER: CAMERON
LEVEL: 1 SCORE: 128
PLAYER: MEDAGIAN
LEVEL: 1 SCORE: 157
CAMERON IS THINKING...
TILES LEFT: 12


PLAYER: CAMERON
LEVEL: 1 SCORE: 28
PLAYER: MEDAGIAN
LEVEL: 1 SCORE: 41
CAMERON IS THINKING...
TILES LEFT: 59

The game ends when there are no tiles left to draw and one player has used all the tiles in the rack. The computer will then analyse the board and display the scores and announce the winner. If you have beaten the computer don't get too smug as there are eight skill levels to play through.

Presentation 90%
Superbly laid out and easy to use.

Graphics 81%
Simple but very effective.

Sound 10%
Informative beeps

Playability 80%
Good – but then Scrabble is.

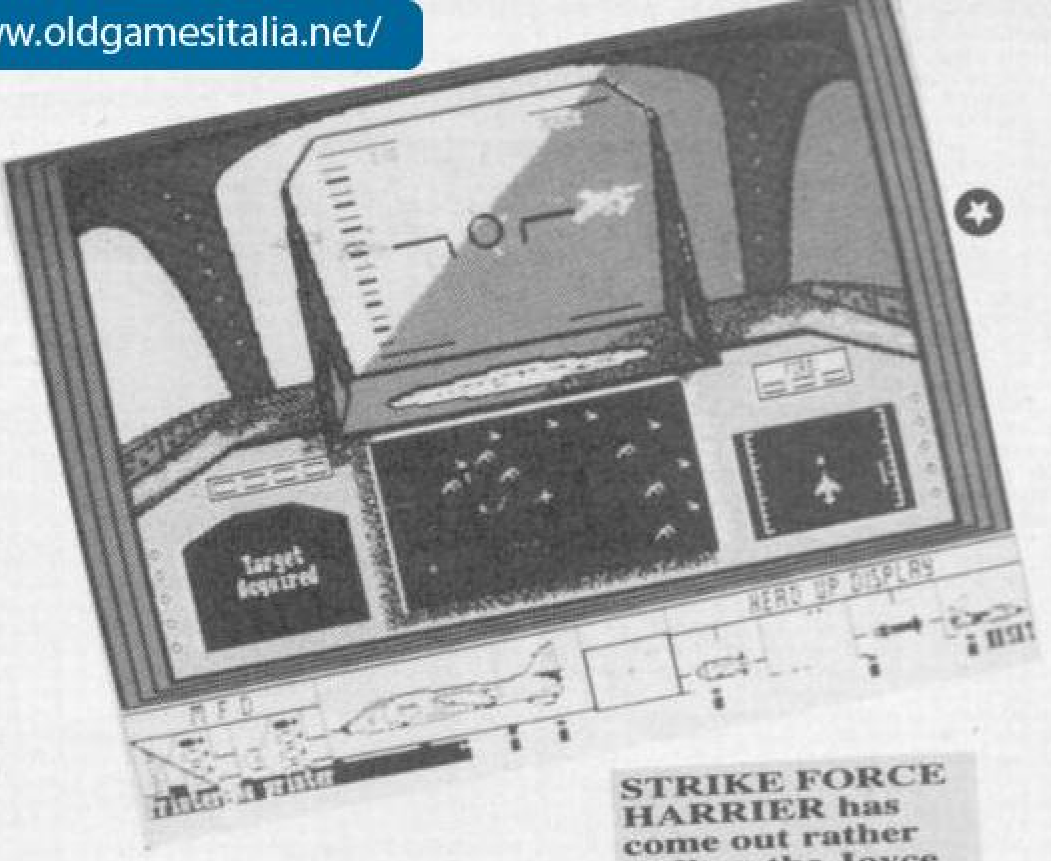
Addictive Qualities 85%
Not addictive, but amazing lasting value.

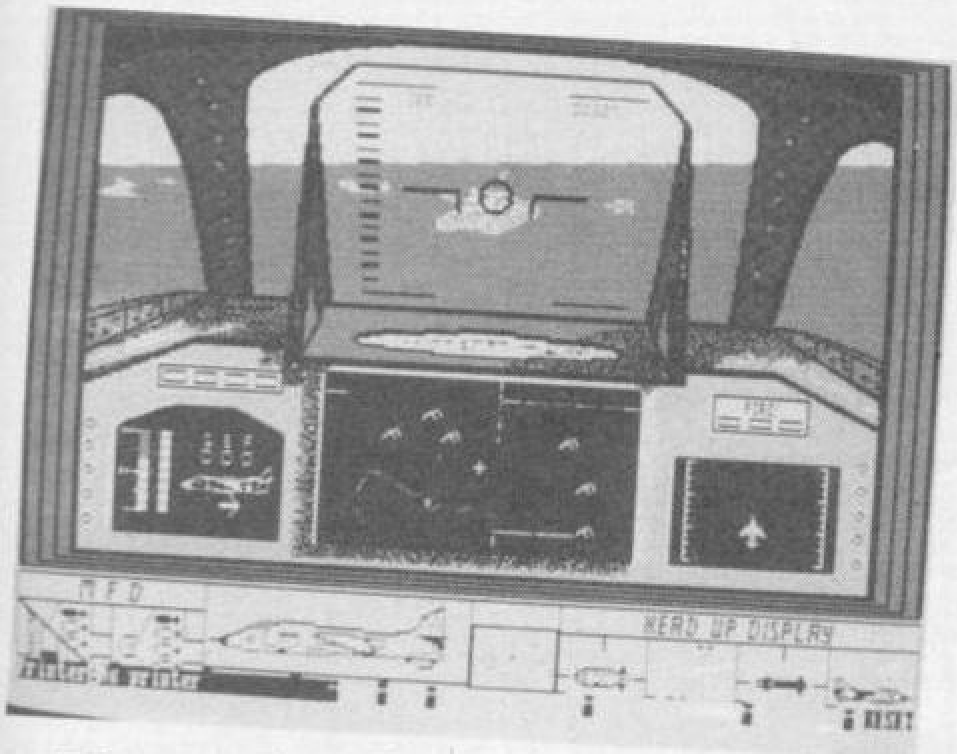
Value for Money 75%
Not bad for the quality of software.

Overall 83%
One for hardened addicts everywhere.

STRIKE FORCE HARRIER

Mirrorsoft, PCW 8256/8512, £19.95 disk, Cascade/Kempston Joystick or Keys





Five planes bearing 54. Request permission to engage. Permission granted to engage over HQ. Going Hunting HQ. Planes at range 2 miles, approx 35,000 feet, going ballistic. Targetting computer locked on leader . . . Firing . . . leader destroyed, taking his wing man. Wait six more just entered event zone, must evade, control shows he's got a radar lock on me, he's going to fire, dropping chaff. There are two more to the sou. . . . futzzh, crackle, hiss.

Once again war has broken out on earth, but this time on your PCW. As it has been agreed that even field atomic weapons are not to be used, you must go up against conventional arms and destroy the enemy's HQ. As a large force could be detected very easily, the powers that be have decided that a lone Harrier with enough armaments to destroy the base should be sent into the event area. Success can only be achieved by learning how to use all your weaponry to its full advantage, and when to use the defences such as chaff and flares to divert enemy missiles. Some of the more useful pieces of equipment are the FOFTRAC (Friend Or Foe Tracking Radar), which tells you if the target that you are currently tracking is an enemy or not; an ARR which determines an enemies position and an MDF which gives you flight information.

The ability to execute vertical or short take-offs and landings is a great boon, as a side effect of this ability is to allow you to VIFF (Vector In Forward Flight), and so outmanoeuvre an enemy by a sudden vertical movement (and a decrease in speed) that will bring you onto the tail of your opponent.

The game begins 500 miles from the enemy base and you must make your way over several areas (or blocks) to reach it. Every time you enter a block you must first do an aerial recon, to establish what is in the area. This involves flying above the cloud layer and flying over the centre of the map, this also has the effect of letting the enemy get a good radar fix on your position. The main display gives you a full instrument panel, which includes a camera shot of the block in the centre, with points moving across it denoting the enemy planes or tanks. To the right of this is a radar that shows the position of any planes nearby and their relative height above or below you.

The game consists of several levels, from practice (a flight simulator) to ace combat – a fast and furious fight that requires nerves of steel and an itchy trigger finger.

When the CPC version came out in April it was one of the best simulation/combat games around, but now up against the likes of TOMAHAWK it doesn't stand up so well. Having said that it is a different sort of game all together and can be quite enjoyable, although it is impossible to use the ground features as a reference as in Tomahawk. Instead you have to rely on the block display to give your position. Overall STRIKE FORCE HARRIER is a good game that should fit very well into any Joyce owner's collection, but it is very overpriced.

Tony

I've always enjoyed STRIKE FORCE HARRIER on the CPC, and this is one game that actually seems to work better on the Joyce. The detail is the first thing that strikes you, none of this blocky rubbish – precise detail with excellent animation. However, just a word of warning, if you want something that you can just sit down and play then leave this alone; it take lots of patience and practice to get this one together.

Richard

STRIKE FORCE HARRIER has come out rather well on the Joyce with the graphics being very well defined. The game has not suffered either and it is still great fun to fly around blast everything out of the sky. One thing I found most enjoyable was finding out what sort of weird and wonderful aerobatics can be achieved, some of which defy the laws of gravity and turn out to be rather illogical. I found that whilst playing you depend a hell of a lot on the cockpit instrumentation something that is somewhat daunting to start with. Apart from that it's fine.

Mass

Presentation 89%
The disk in the big red box.

Graphics 75%
Rather unappealing graphics but functional.

Sound 0%
There ain't any!

Playability 75%
Hard to get into but worth it.

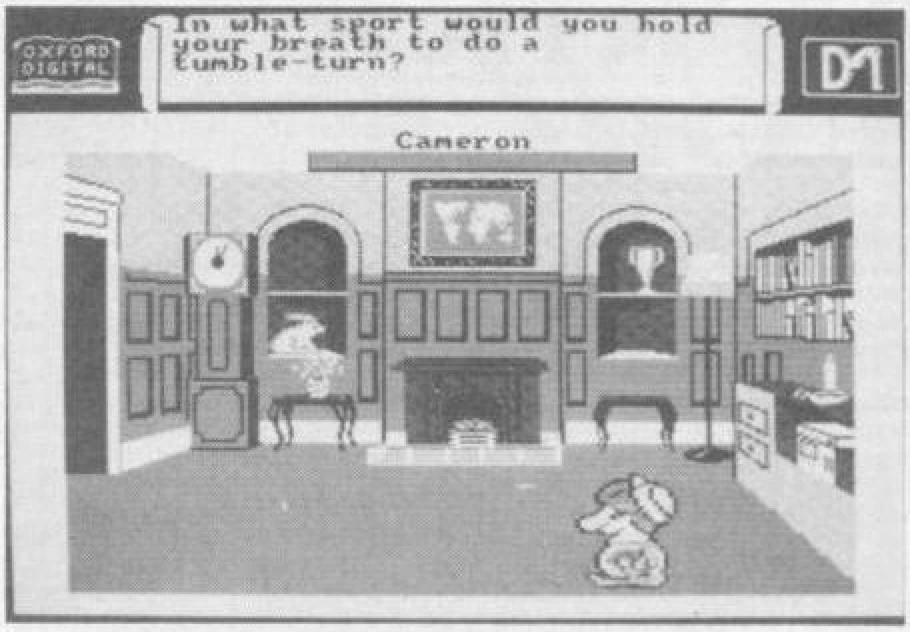
Addictive qualities 80%
A good way of spending a rainy afternoon.

Value for money 70%
Even on PCW the price is a little over the top.

Overall 75%
Yet another competent conversion of a great CPC game.

TRIVIAL PURSUITS

Domark, £14.95 disk, keys



In what sport would you hold your breath to do a tumble-turn?

Cameron

Trivial Pursuits seems to have really spread its wrath on nearly every computer in existence – and the Joyce isn't going to be left out. This version follows the board game in that the overall object is to collect a wedge from each of the category HQ squares and once all six have been won, make your way to the centre hub, answer a question, and win the game.

TRIVIAL PURSUIT on the PCW has retained all the original features and is still just as much fun to play. As expected the sound is rather poor and the various tunes are very difficult to recognise and to me sound all the same. I feel it would have been much better if the had been omitted as I haven't yet got a musical question right. Otherwise TP on the Joyce is fine with me.

Mass

On loading the menus are displayed on screen; the main one selects options concerned with the actual gameplay and consists of the number of players, starting the game, timer on, effects on or off, load questions or analyse the current scores. There is one final option that determines whether TP is awake or asleep. Mr TP is the Trivial Pursuits mascot and chief minion dart thrower – it is he who determines the 'roll of the dice' by throwing a dart at the board and so selects a number from one to six.

There are two screens: the first one being the play screen. This consists of the standard-ish Trivial Pursuits board with the numbers on it. There is also a score chart for each player and a category selection menu. The categories are art and literature, science, geography, history, sport and leisure and entertainment by pressing the 'stop' key it is possible to see which are your strongest questions and which need some practice.

I thoroughly enjoyed playing TRIVIAL PURSUITS on the CPC and I was not so sure it would hit the mark on the PCW but that just goes to prove how wrong you can be. If anything the PCW version is slightly faster than the CPC version and, as it is in green, not such a strain on the eyes. Luckily it's overcome the problem of the lack of colour with the use of shading and if you follow the on screen guide this shouldn't cause too much trouble. As with any TP game there's very little point playing it without more than two players as when playing on your tod the temptation to cheat is just too great!

Richard

When a number has been selected several segments will flash. These illustrate the possible locations you can move your counter to. With the Joyce being slightly limited with colours all the segments are shaded to show the different categories.

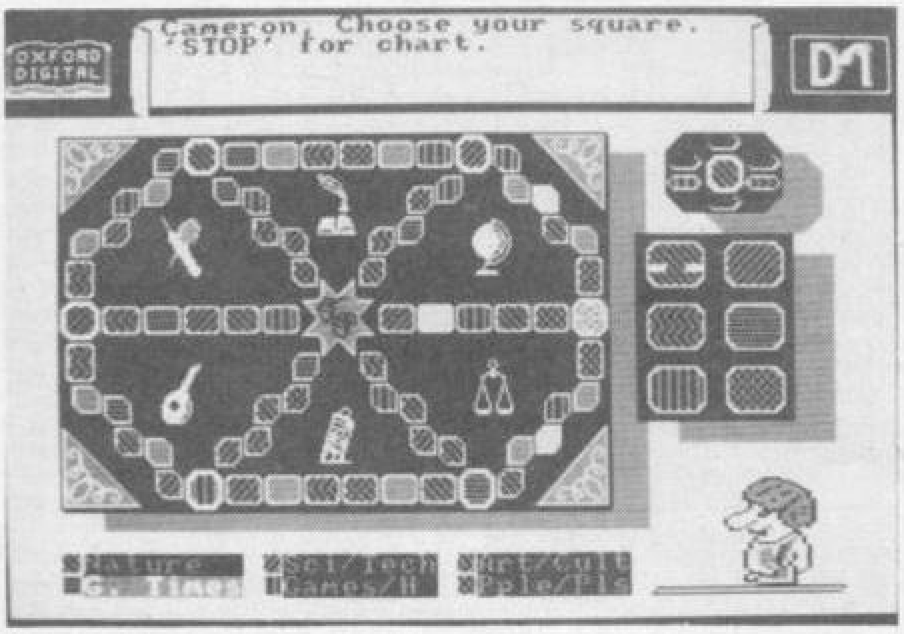
The other screen is the Question Parlour; this screen will scroll into view when you've selected a category and TP will proceed to ask a question. When the answer has been screamed out and everyone has heard what has been said press the space bar and the answer will appear. Now it's time to be honest and tell TP if you managed to get the question right or wrong by pressing the cursor so either the yes or no display lights up.

Several forms of question can be asked in this room. The standard text question, a graphical question (if colours are required the shading technique will be employed as well as a key to what shades represent which colour), and a music question. Each question is displayed at the top of the screen alongside the current player's name and the answer revealed in the same space.

It has been said before, and I may as well say it again, you couldn't hope for a better conversion of the classic board game. The music questions could have been left out of the PCW version as they sound really bad but apart from that the game retains all the playability of the CPC version. If you have access to a PCW then get a copy, just think of the fun you will have round the office!

Tony

When all six wedge question have been answered correctly the player must make his way to the centre hub and answer a question.



Cameron, Choose your square.
'STOP' for chart.

Presentation 94%
Very professional from the beginning.

Graphics 88%
Shading makes up for lack of colour very well.

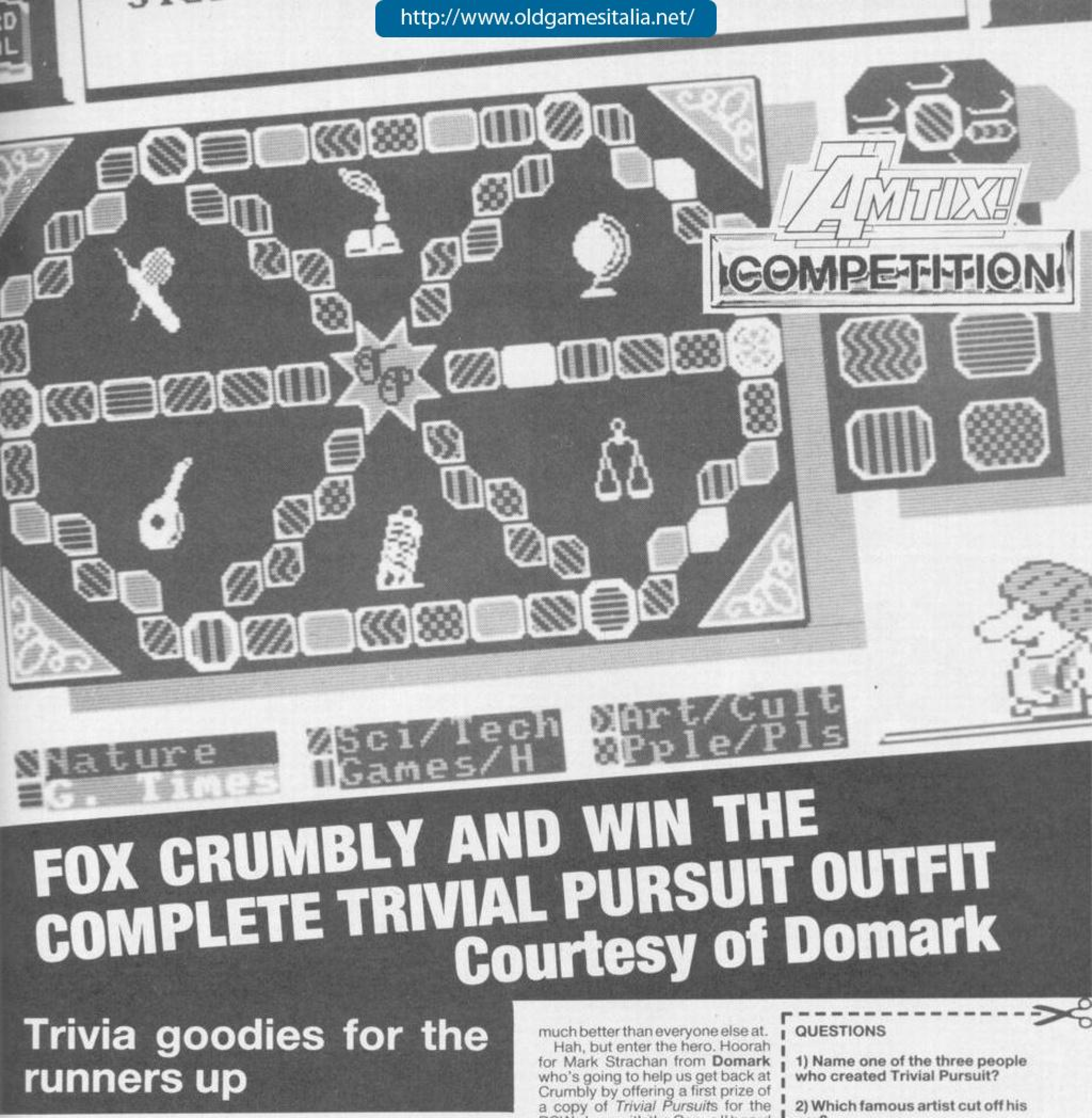
Sound 55%
Good for the Joyce, but better has been heard on it.

Playability 92%
Quick fast responses, easy use of menus.

Addictive Qualities 88%
Will keep a group of players occupied for some time.

Value for Money 88%
Worth it for all it offers Joyce owners.

Overall 89%
The one and only Trivia game.



FOX CRUMBLY AND WIN THE COMPLETE TRIVIAL PURSUIT OUTFIT Courtesy of Domark

Trivia goodies for the runners up

Trivial Pursuits is the name of the world's biggest selling board game and almost everyone has heard of it. Most people have played on a board; and some have even played it on their CPC. Well now thanks to **Domark**, people will even be able to play it on their Amstrad Word Processor. No more boring lunch hours spent in the office tucking into cheese and pickle sandwich and wondering what to do until it's time to start again – No siree!

With a TP disk you can turn your Joyce into a micro powered Magnus Magnusson as you are asked question after question and with the added bonus of sound and graphics, a whole new host of questions can be asked – Hoorah for the Joyce and hoorah for Domark!

Now, even the blistered fingers of the AMTIX! staffers can find their way to their keyboards – even if it isn't quite for the use that Malcolm would prefer. The office has turned into a series of questions and answers as each person vies with Malcolm, asking him questions to try and trip him up. Malcolm doesn't mind that much though, because for once, age is a definite advantage, and Old Crumbly may have had a lot of water pass under his bridge but it all seems to have collected in his fountain of knowledge.

Such is Malc's ability to know the trivia of the world that no-one in the office will play with him any more because he answers the questions almost before anyone can set them. It's beginning to affect morale too, as Malcolm is becoming very bossy now that he's found something that he's so much better than everyone else at.

Hah, but enter the hero. Hoorah for Mark Strachan from **Domark** who's going to help us get back at Crumbly by offering a first prize of a copy of *Trivial Pursuits* for the PCW along with the Genus II board game, a TP quiz book, TP mug and some very special TP choccies for the person who can find a question that Crumbly can't answer. Two runners up will receive a copy of the quizbook, a TP mug and choccies with seven runners up getting a copy of the TP quiz book.

All you have to do to enter is to correctly answer the questions at the bottom of the page and then ask Crumbly your own poseur.

Send your entries to **CRUMBLY'S (A) POSEUR, AMTIX! Towers, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB** to arrive here no later than the 5th February. . . . . .

QUESTIONS

1) Name one of the three people who created Trivial Pursuit?

2) Which famous artist cut off his ear?

3) Where will the 1988 Olympic Games be held?

Okay Crumbly, my question for you is:

....

....

....

Answer (don't worry we shall not show Crumbly):

....

....

Name ....
Address ....
....
....

THE LEGENDARY AMTIX! CHA INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIO VERSUS THE GEORDIE TEENAGER

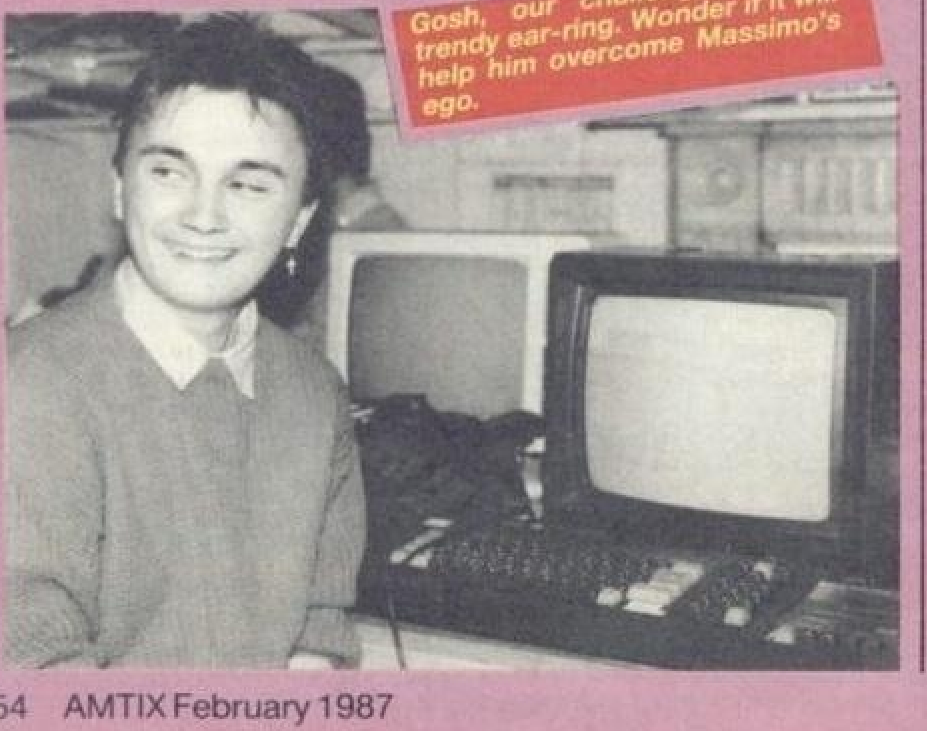
As related by the mighty Crumbly one, MALCOLM HARDING

It's cruel I know, but during the last few months I have become increasingly incensed with the rantings and ravings of our very own Italian connection, the one and only Massimo Valducci, who is forever crowing about his skills playing the game *Dan Dare*. Okay, so he was probably the first member of the public to complete the game when we reviewed it back in issue 13 (and he says he's still waiting for his T-Shirt Pat!) but he doesn't have to go on about it for ever, does he?

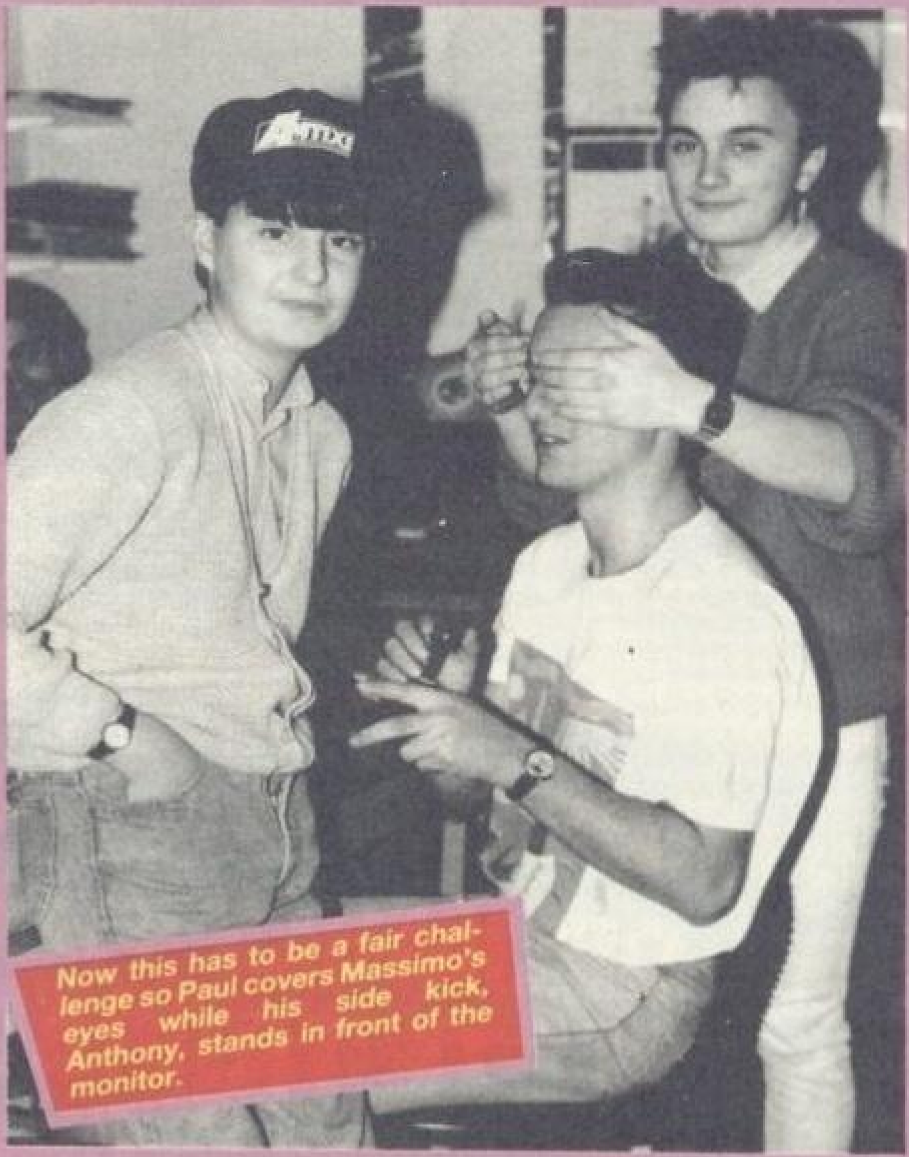
I have endured his ego trips many a morning and night as we travel together along the A49 from Shrewsbury to AMTIX! Towers and back again, and I have often prayed that someone, somewhere, could come along and wipe the smile off his face! Oh how sweet that would be! Recently Saffron pointed out a high score by a reader, one Paul Abley from Crook in County Durham. He claimed to have scored over 22,000 at that particular game. Perfect, I thought, let's invite this Crook teenager down for a challenge match and bring this macaroni muncher, with the spaghetti smile, back to Earth, and perhaps take the pasta out of him at the same time.

So it came to pass that on a wet and windy winter's day, Mass and I tramped down to British Rail's Ludlow ''Station'' to collect the 17 year old Geordie who was accompanied by his pal, a sproglet by the name of Anthony Curl. Both looked a bit the worse for wear - understandable really, as they had been travelling on various trains for some six hours! Gosh it really is a long way from County Durham.

After a hasty lunch at the Pig and Ball Bearings, where the challenger and his accomplice tucked into some much needed victuals (and I enjoyed my daily infusion of old flatulence bitter) we tramped back to the highest turret at the Towers. I was. starting to worry a bit about our challenger's chances, for Mass declined his usual pint of best bitter in favour of a soft drink, the rotten lasagne lounge lizard! He was taking his first challenge very seriously indeed. Anyway I digress. Once we had arrived at the Towers our cool challenger soon settled down to a few practice games of *Dan Dare* and looked equally determined as he prepared himself for the serious business of the day.



Gosh, our challenger has a trendy ear-ring. Wonder if it will help him overcome Massimo's ego.



Now this has to be a fair challenge so Paul covers Massimo's eyes while his side kick, Anthony, stands in front of the monitor.

The game was loaded up on two 464's, and the comps minion received a well aimed kick up the derriere as we sought some rules for this needle match. Eventually he suggested the challenge be played thus. The winner would be the one who completed the game in the quickest time. Each combatant would play three games and the fastest overall time would count. During the final practice game disaster struck our plucky challenger when the joystick he had brought with him refused to function in a proper manner. A quick inspection of a load of AMTIX! joysticks failed to impress him, but our erstwhile colleagues from ZZAP satisfied the joystick junkie with a suitable weapon, although it was soon to become only too obvious that young Paul was sorely missing his favourite piece!

ROUND ONE

At the given signal, and with stop watches primed, they were off and running. As readers know, the game revolves around the superhero Dan Dare, his ever-faithful pal Digby, and Professor Peabody, who have set off in their spaceship, Anastasia, to destroy an asteroid which is under the control of the evil Mekon and which is heading on a collision course with our own dear planet Earth. Sadly they are ambushed by the nasty Treens and Digby is captured. It's left to Dan to rescue him by collecting pieces of a bridge. Then Dan has to find the Mekon's spaceship and head back for home in time for tea.

That's the aim of the game and in seconds both combatants were locked in a true power struggle to win the day. Poor Dan Dare had never moved so fast in his life and after 63 seconds Mass dropped the first piece of the bridge into place, just four seconds ahead of the challenger. It took the cocky one another two minutes to drop the second piece in place without the loss of any of his five lives. Almost five and a half minutes into the game he lost his first life but within another half a minute he had the third piece of the bridge in place. Soon after he lost another life but by now he was feeling confident, and as his score soared

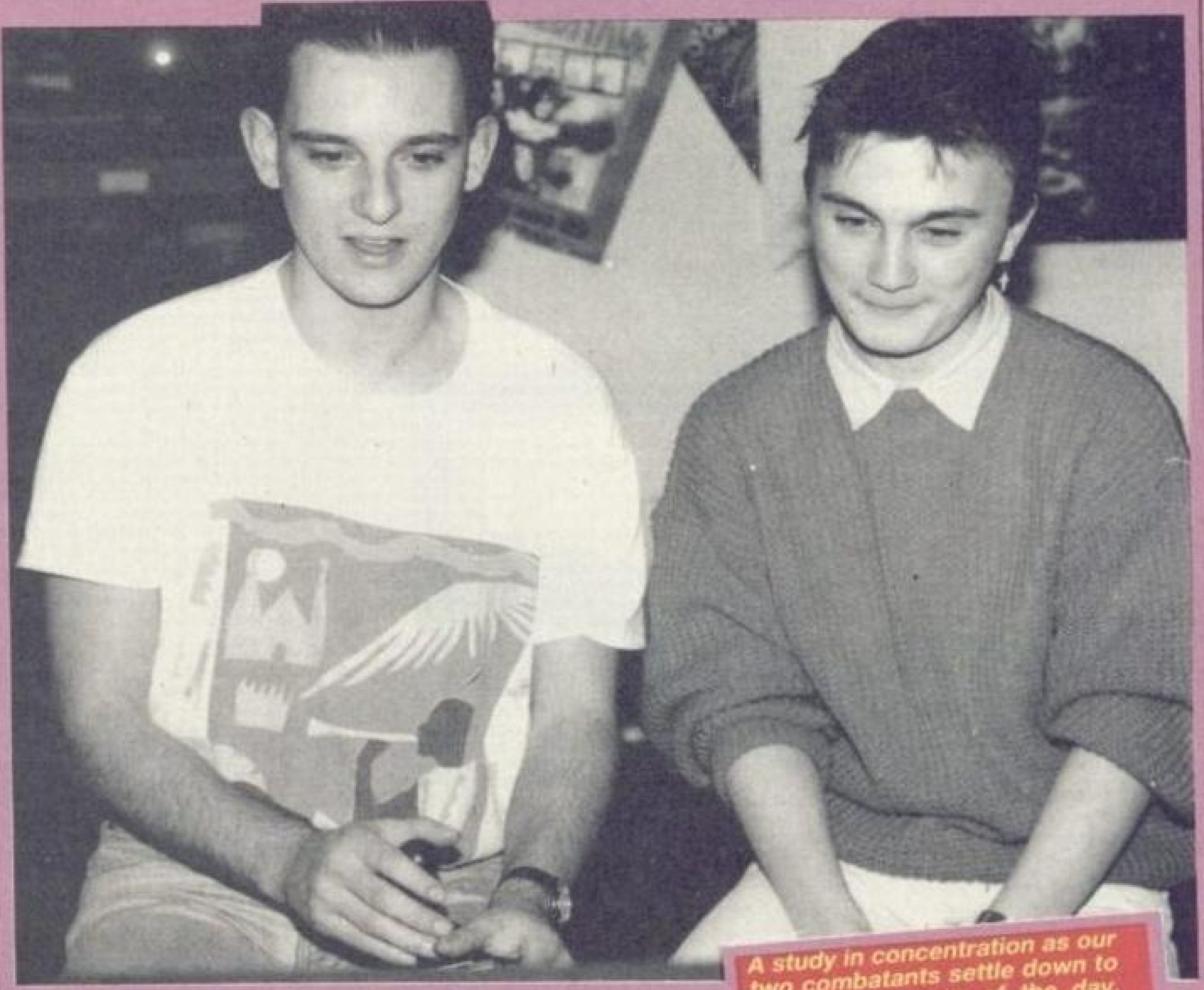
LLENGE GAINS AN N, IT'S THE ITALIAN STALLION

towards 12,000 plus he put the final piece into place. After that it was a quick dash to the spaceship and freedom, although he did fail to kill the Mekon. Even so he did finish with a score of 18,525 in a time of 9 mins 30 secs. Paul, sadly, was not faring too well, for he lost a life after delivering the first piece of the bridge. He lost two more lives to the Treens within the space of 20 seconds and finally came out of the first game with only one piece in place and a time of 3 mins 55 secs. I'm sure Mass has a big smirk on his face. Stay cool Paul, you can still do it!

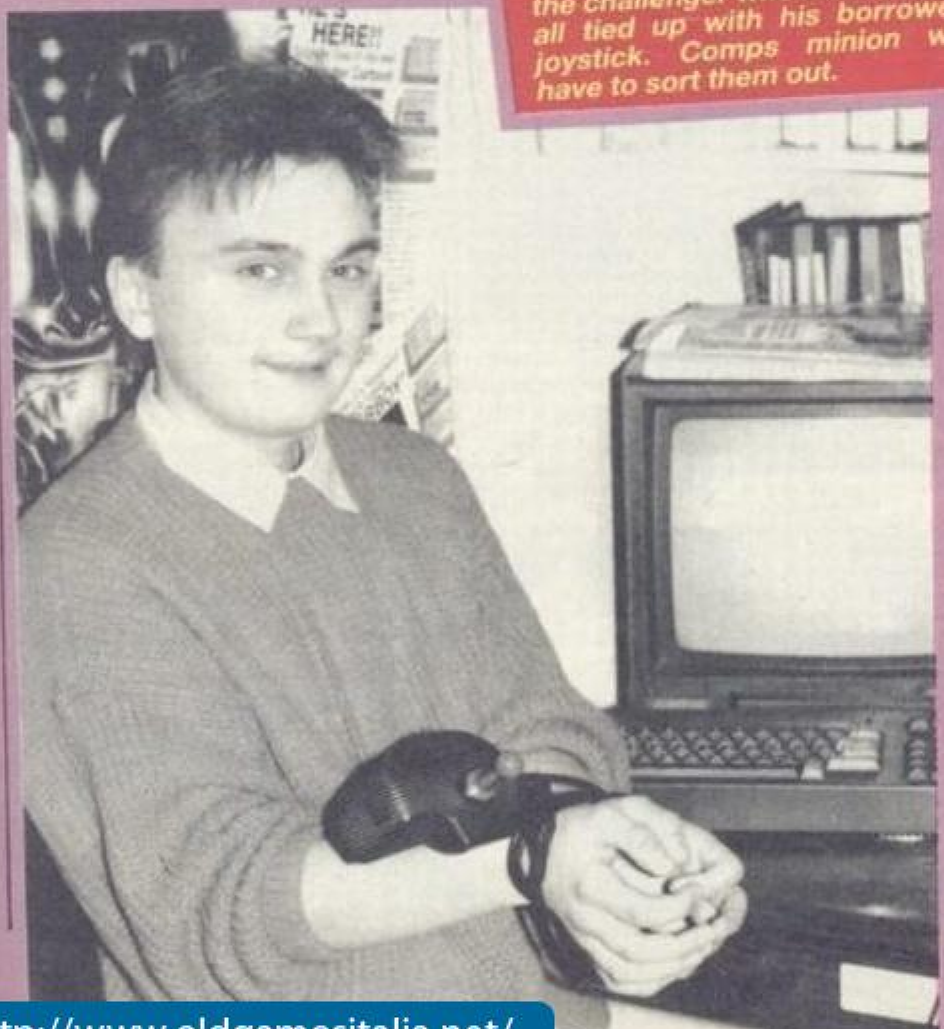
ROUND TWO

As Tony keeps an eye on the challenger's progress in his second game I decide to keep a note of times as Mass goes through each 1,000 point barrier – the result is quite impressive. Within two and a half minutes he is going through 6,000, and after 3 mins 32 secs he has two parts of the bridge in place. Four minutes later, with a score of over 13,000 showing, he takes the final part of the bridge and drops it into place. Now poor Dan has to sprint for his life and he blasts off for Earth in a time of 8 mins 50 secs.

Paul starts his second game very well and the first piece is found in 29 secs; he means business this time. It is put in its place



A study in concentration as our two combatants settle down to the real business of the day. What's Mass doing with his tongue?



Massimo gets his revenge on the challenger who seems to be all tied up with his borrowed joystick. Comps minion will have to sort them out.

If you want to take part in the challenge, and you gotta be good to do so then fill in the form, no cheating mind, and post it off to, **AMTIX! Eg Challenge, AMTIX!, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.**

Ooooo, yes please, I am ever so modestly brilliant at games and I accept the gauntlet challenge to take on:

.... (Name of AMTIX! Ego chappie)

To a game of ....

I go by the name of ....

And my humble address is ....

....

....

Postcode ....

Telephone number ....

So ring me up and I'll be up to Ludlow faster than you can say 'Kill the Comps minion'! I promise I don't, and would never dream of, cheating so come on guys — give me a buzz please!

AMTIX CHALLENGE!

The challenge is over and Paul decides to try and use the 464 as a Yamaha organ. Afraid its sound qualities are not quite that good.

in 1 min 30 secs, but it costs him two lives. Undaunted he gets straight back into the game collecting the second piece for a time of 3 mins 13 sec and the third after 4 mins 17 secs. He loses the rest of his lives for a final time of 4 mins 40 secs without any further success. How can I stop Massimo from being a runaway winner? It's looking bad for the diminutive Geordie!

ROUND THREE

The third, and final game, begins and Mass senses victory as he throws Dan along the passageways at a rate of knots. After 42 seconds he has found the first piece of the bridge and it takes just 35 more seconds to put it in place. The second piece is duly found and is dropped in place before three minutes are on the watch. Mass looks very happy now as he searches out the third piece and puts it firmly into place with just 4 mins 20 secs on the clock. It takes him another 1 min 50 secs to position the final piece and he still has three of his five lives left, having lost the two deliberately for tactical reasons! In an almost casual manner he steers Dan to success and blast-off occurs just 7 mins 45 secs after he had started.

Paul knows he is staring defeat in the face but he is not going to give up without a fight. He gives it his best and puts the first piece in position in 2 mins 18 secs, losing only 1 life on the way. He gets the second in 3 mins 9 secs and puts it in position in 4 mins 23 secs, but, oops, there goes another life as he falls off the bridge, what a very silly billy! This young man intends to fight on to the end and he gets the third piece in position in 6 mins 17 secs, and the fourth in 7 mins 45 secs. It looks like he might beat the mighty Mass after all. But, horrors of horrors, what's this? He forgets to push the button that lets him into the spaceship and has to go all the way back to hit it and free Digby. The challenge is over, alas, and he finishes with a time of 10 mins 32 secs. He does gain some consolation in that he manages to shoot the Mekon though, which is more than can be said for Mass.

So it is all over. Mass positively beams with joy and scampers around the office screaming "Mamma mia! – Ciao Baby!" while our worthy challenger mutters at the joystick and generally looks most unhappy with life. As for my hopes of seeing Mass beaten into submission, oh well, there's always another day. To be fair he was a worthy champion but next time I shall select a game he does not enjoy playing – perhaps a 3D one!!

In the meantime if any of you high scoring joystick junkies think you can stand the strain of a momentous journey to the centre of the Universe (well to Ludlow actually), then drop a line on the form to our very own Ms Saffron Trevaskis. Even if you don't come to visit us in the following months then your name will soon appear on Saffron's Scoreboard. Go get some amazing scores and don't forget. Keep on waggling!

Massimo thanks God (or should that be the Pope) for his inspirational performance as he presents an AMTIX! T Shirt and Cap to the gallant loser.

AMTECH

ANTHONY CLARKE

AMTECH makes its appearance yet again, this month some of my space was taken over by game reviews (boo shame), but this helped me out a little as a lot of tech stuff has come in late.

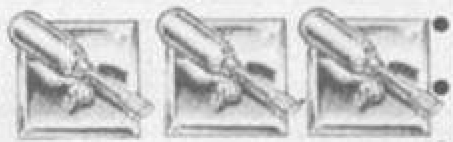
We quaver, sorry cover, the latest music utility to come from **Gremlin Graphics**, and take a peek at *POCKET WORDSTAR* (is it all its cracked up to be?) From **Pride Utilities** there is a new form of art package, while the next in a long line of tape to disk copiers on the Amstrad (this time from **Nemisis**) also known as *Bonzo*.

Start sending in those letters, your problem may seem trivial, but you can guarantee that someone else is having the same problem and your letter may give relief to many a furrowed brow. If you have hints or tips on the use of the Amstrad range then why not send those in too. The address is **AMTECH, 1/2 King Street, LUDLOW, Shropshire. SY8 1AQ.**

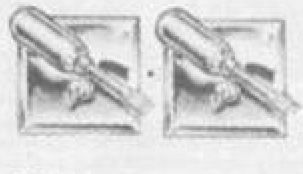
The Screwdriver Awards system. AMTECH now has screwdrivers to give away — not to readers but to products reviewed. New and innovative hardware or software that either breaks new ground or improves on an existing concept is particularly likely to collect a screwdriver . . . but if we just like something a lot, we'll hand out an award.

None of your cheapo lead-alloy screwdrivers here — AMTECH only awards the best: gold, silver and bronze.

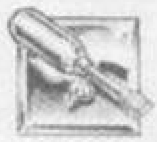
The Golden Screwdriver is given to a product that we reckon is the best thing ever produced in its field. Three screwdrivers appear with the review . . .



The Silver Screwdriver turns up in the guise of a pair of screwdrivers and indicates that the product is very good, but perhaps not terribly innovative . . .

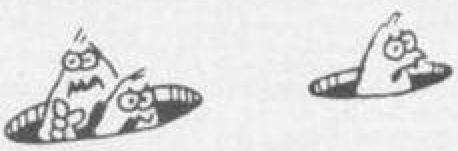


The Bronze Screwdriver is awarded for competence in an existing field. A neat implementation of a well established idea earns a single screwdriver.



E.L.S.

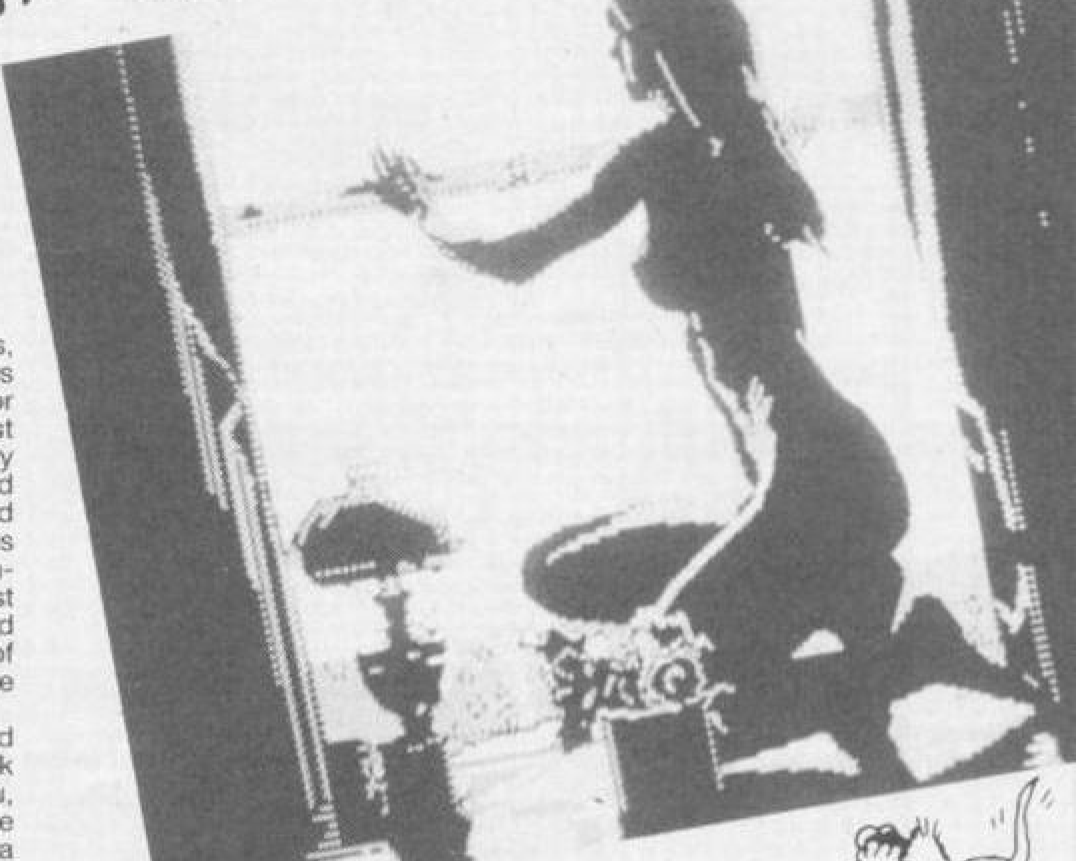
Oh yes!



So many art designers have come out for the Amstrad that it is hard to bring out something new that betters all the rest. **Pride Utilities** have got away from the idea of an all-round screen designer, and instead have brought out a new form of art utility known as the *Electronic Lantern Show*. In fact this package is not a screen designer at all, but allows you to edit the way the pictures are shown on screen, change the colours, zoom in on certain areas and even make multiple views of each picture. What's more, the package also contains 28 pictures for you to experiment with.

After loading, you are presented with the main menu. Selecting the first option allows you to load a screen from disk. As well as its own format for storing pictures, ELS also allows you to load files created by the ESP light pen or **Amsoft**'s screen designer. Most other screens that were created by a different program can be loaded by using the "uncompressed screen" option. As all the pictures supplied with the utility are compressed, you should pick the first option on the list – "compressed screen" – which displays a list of all those files that have the **BIN** file type.

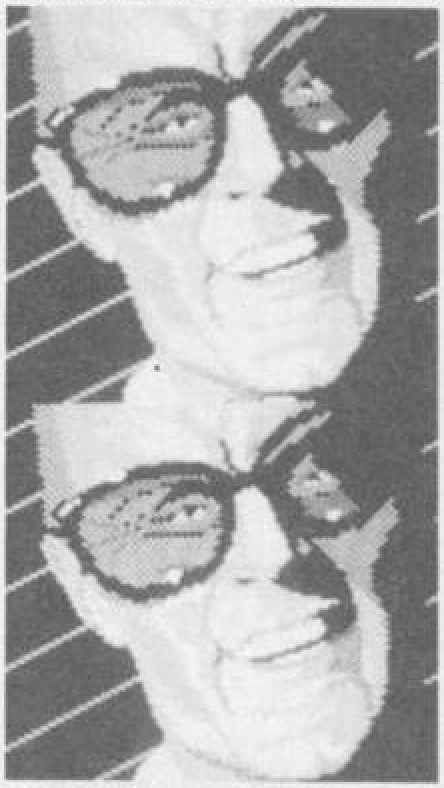
Once a picture has been edited it can be saved back onto the disk using option 4 on the main menu, but you must remember that the screens will always be saved in a compacted form. The edit picture option allows you to play with the colours and mode used by a ▷



screen, this is quite important when a screen is loaded using the "uncompacted screen" option, as no information is given on the colours used by the screen, or the mode in which it was created. The selection of each option from this screen is quite strange. To change the ink colour you must type P, two numbers and then the enter key. This will allow you to change that particular colour using the cursor keys. Pressing shift or control will change the secondary values of the ink selected, and so allow flashing inks to be used. Pressing enter will stop the function and allow you to select another ink, change the border colour, reset the colours, change the mode or exit from the function back to the main menu.

The most interesting mode available on the machine is the "picture show option". The first ability of the package that you will discover is the ability to move the screen around using the cursor keys. Unlike many other programs this option is very fast, though it will only scroll in bytes (8 pixels at a time in mode 2, 2 pixels in mode 0). Using control with the up key will magnify an area inside a marked box to fill the screen. This picture in turn can be magnified using the marked box. Using the control plus the down cursor key will flip the picture vertically, while control with the right key will do the same in the horizontal plane.

The best of all the functions for me, was that by hitting the control and left cursor key the screen was split into four, and the picture shown at one quarter of its size in each sector of the screen. By using a combination of magnify and multi-frame image you can create some very unusual effects.



Also included with the package is a printer dump utility known as **Printer Pack II**. If you want to use the print options from ELS then you must initialise this program first. The printer pack sets up four RSXs which are tailored to the printer that you are using. The PROFF and PRON functions will switch on or off the printer echo, so that any text that is printed on the screen will also be sent to the printer. The TEXT option will send any text on screen to the printer, while the DUMP command will send a graphic dump of the screen to the printer. When used from within ELS you are also given a further option which will print out poster-sized versions of any screen.

At £14.95 (on disk only) ELS is a little steep, but it does give you many functions that are not available on any art package, indeed it complements most art programs well. I would have liked a few more options such as bending pictures around spheres, but what it does, it does well and I've no real complaints about its performance.

BOOKS FOR AMSTRAD COMPUTER OWNERS

Wargaming on the Amstrad CPC464, 664 & 6128
Owen & Audrey Bishop
Explains the principles of wargaming and how to design your own computer wargames, without any knowledge of BASIC programming. The book includes full listings of three wargames, ready to type in and run on your Amstrad. These games are a Pacific Island skirmish from World War 2, a battle from the English Civil War, and replay of the famous Battle of Omdurman, complete with playing instructions. There is a section on two-computer wargaming and a special feature shows you how to play against a distant computerised opponent down the phone lines, using a modem!
234 × 156mm,
256pp £9.95
0 85242 888 X
PRODUCT CODE 170109
NEW TITLE

Working Graphics on the Amstrad CPC 464 and 664 –
James, Gee & Ewbank
Explains Amstrad graphics and how you can use them. Covers sprites, animation, computer assisted painting, two and three dimensional graphics, and charts and graphs. A practical book that gives enough information for you to convert the programs for your own purposes – or use them as they stand. All listings are taken from working programs.
Illustrated, 234 × 156mm,
192pp £7.95
085242 874 X
PRODUCT CODE No. 170087

Applications for the Amstrad CPC 464 and 664 –
Garry Marshall
The book describes, demonstrates and illustrates the full range of useful applications for the Amstrad computers. From word processors, databases and spreadsheets to problem solving, from 'bolt-ons' like cassette and disc drives, printers, plotters, joysticks, light pens and mice, to communications uses – Prestel, Micronet 80, databases, private bulletin boards and Telecom Gold.
Illustrated, 234 × 156mm,
128pp £7.95
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PRODUCT CODE No. 170011

Amstrad Communications
Mike James, Kay Ewbank & S. M. Gee
Here's the book to help you turn your Amstrad computer into a highly sophisticated communications system. It will help you get the best from your Amstrad CPC464, 664 or 6128 using the currently available communications software and hardware. It explains all about interfaces, modems, on-line systems and databases, and shows you how to go about making that all important first contact.
Illustrated,
234 × 156mm,
192pp £8.95
0 85242 891 X
PRODUCT CODE 170117
NEW TITLE

Adventure Programming on the Amstrad CPC 464 and 664 –
Steve Lucas
The book to teach you how to write your own adventure programs, including developing the plot, drawing the map, and translating the objects in the game into DATA statements. High-resolution graphics and sound are also described, and listings for three typical adventure games are also included.
Illustrated, 234 × 156mm,
224pp £7.95
0 85242 856 1
PRODUCT CODE No. 170044

Subroutines for the Amstrad CPC 464 and 664 –
Stephenson & Stephenson
The book to show you how to put your Amstrad computer to serious use. More than 50 fully tested subroutines in a wide variety of areas – graphics, maths, music, data processing etc. Major listings include a 3 graph function plotter, an index compiler, and a music sequencer – each being well worth the purchase price of the book in its own right!
Illustrated, 234 × 156mm,
224pp £7.95
0 85242 855 3
PRODUCT CODE No. 170036

Assembly Language Programming for the Amstrad CPC 464 and 664 –
A P Stephenson and D J Stephenson
Clearly written and readable introduction to Z80 machine code on the Amstrad CPC 464 and 664. It explains binary and hexadecimal arithmetic and contrasts the pros and cons of machine code against BASIC. The book includes a hex loading program, for those working without an assembler, and the Amstrad Assembler/Disassembler.
Illustrated, 234 × 156mm,
160pp £7.95
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ARGUS BOOKS

idle Meddling

Tape to disk utilities just keep arriving, the latest two are from **Nemisis**, and are known as the *Bonzo Clone Arranger* and the *Bonzo Super Meddler*.

The *Clone Arranger*'s main objective is to release some space on those disks that contain little programs which you may require but not very often. The first option will save an entire disk to tape at a speed of 1000 to 3000 baud. The best speed to pick is around 2000 baud as this allows you to save two sides of a disk on a normal C60 cassette. As long as you are using a 464, or a 6128/664 with motor control on the tape deck, then you should be able to leave the program to do all the work automatically once it is started.

The tape to disk option does the opposite of function one. The disk, that the data is saved back onto a disk, need not even be formatted as the program does this for you as it goes along, though you must be careful that any data you require from the disk that is to be used is saved elsewhere first. This is because the whole disk is written over. It is not possible to save a disk with a strange format to tape, like those used by **Ocean** and **Imagine**, but then again if it did then it would encourage piracy.

The DISC to DISC option is used to backup those disks with a strange format. As usual it will copy a good deal of the formats now used but there are still a few that it fails to clone, like *SPINDIZZY* or *FRACTALUS*. As the program copies only 8 tracks at a time you will have to be content with 10 disk swaps to copy one disk.

The Catalogue option is similar to the normal CAT command and is just a convenient way of looking what is on the disk from the program rather than going back to BASIC.

A formatter is included and can format the disks to any of the four standards available from the normal FORMAT or DISCKIT programs supplied with CP/M. The formatting process is quite fast at about 30 seconds for a complete disk, though if you use system format this time increases to 45 seconds as the system tracks must also be written to the disk.

The last command is READ DIRECTORY, which will give you a list of everything that is on a disk, including files that may have been erased. The program also has a secondary function which gives you a format analysis of the disk, including information of non standard formats and even if the drive is using tracks 41 and 42. The DISC to DISC option automatically detects any formats that use the extra tracks and copies them separately.

The Clone arranger is not the most complete disk utilities package, and is by no means the best, but it does exactly what it set out to do, and in that it is quite a good utility.

Neither AMTIX! nor NEMISIS condone piracy of any sort. The utility is only reviewed because it is very useful for backing up your own software and under no circumstances should it be used to copy software for profit or for lending to friends.

SUPER MEDDLING

Next into the pot from **Nemisis** is their *Super Meddler* utility, made to transfer a whole range of programs, along with their diverse loaders, to disk.

As usual there is an option to transfer those programs that use the normal Amstrad loader. The option also includes a relocator for those programs that overwrite the disc firmware etc. Unlike *Discovery*, the program will not attempt to change BASIC loaders – that must be done manually. You also have to remember to change loading addresses and lengths of files if you are to change loaders yourself. It doesn't stop there, at times you may need to poke several locations before the program will run properly. Even so, the drawbacks are few and most games from AMSOFT will transfer using this option.

Some programs, such as *Spindizzy*, load as headerless files. The program gets around these by transferring all programs that are loaded using calls to &BCA1 (cas in direct), and saves each with the names BACK1, BACK2 etc. You must then transfer any initial loader program to disk, and make changes so that it loads the new disk files. You are warned that this option is not for the inexperienced, but a little work should yield some good results.

Certain manufacturers use a loader known as *Speedlock*, which usually flashes the border 'Spectrum style'. At times this option will not work because of superlong files, in this case you have to use the *Bonkey* files. Unlike *Discovery*, which automatically saves the screen along with the program, the *Bonkey* files have to be selected before you can get anywhere. *Picbonk* is used when a program requires the loading screen after it has finished loading.

The last option is *Ram Dam* and *Ram Damx*. To use these you will have to become very familiar with the program that you are trying to transfer. You must remember when it is about to finish loading by using the tape counter, then just before the end of loading you must press the TAB key. This will interrupt the load and save the whole lot to disk. This function is a little dodgy to say the least, after all if the program is loading at 2000 bits per second you are liable to miss 165 bytes of data by hitting TAB just one second too soon.

Also included with the package is a program called *Cutedisk*. It is capable of letting you view BASIC files, even if they are protected, and can be used to some extent as a directory editor. It also has the ability to save files from disk to tape so that they no longer take up valuable disk space.

Tape to disk utilities are appearing quite rapidly these days, so the choice between them is becoming quite a difficult one. The *Meddler* doesn't offer anything new, but it is quite competent, though at the price both programs could have been better packaged.

The price of the BONZO CLONE ARRANGER tape is £6.00. The BONZO SUPER MEDDLER tape costs £7.50, and both can be bought on one disk for £16.00.

TAPE AND DISK CPC 464/664/6128 UTILITIES
● A FULL MONEY BACK GUARANTEE AND UPDATE SERVICE
(always state which Amstrad you own)

TAPESPEED TWO (TS2)

Converts your slow loading software, (including MANY clicky/jerky leaders) to a max of 3600 baud. Cost £6.99.

● AMAZING! — now converts many of the 'CLICKY' leader programs. Some will now run on 664/6128 for FIRST time!
● Fully automatic. It loads in continuously up to 44K.
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● Handles HEADERLESS files and many non-standard loaders (eg Spectrum) — Speed (baud rate) detector.

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For 464, 664 and 6128 owners — essential to help you manage your AMSTRAD drive. No risk — very useful and only £5.99!

● Does a CAT which can then be used to do repeat ERASURES very easily. Gives disk type. Memory free/used.
● 2 Disk editors — edit or study sectors of a disk.
● Recover ERASED files. Simple whole disk COPIER.
● Outputs to printer. Many other features.

Overseas: add £1 within Europe, £1.50 other countries per product). SAE for more information.

LERM, DEPTTX, 11 BEACONSFIELD CLOSE, WHITLEY BAY, TYNE & WEAR

AMTIX! MERRY DISK BOX OFFER

Save on shop prices!

JUST £5 the lot!

S·A·S RAID
DOORS OF DOOM

Gimme a 'd' Gimme a 'i' Gimme a 's' Gimme a 'k' Gimme a 's'. Put them together and what have you got? Lots of 3 inch disks all over of the place. All in a messy heap. No use at all.

Once more we've come to the rescue with a fabulous Disk box — pictured here! The box can hold 10 disks in all — but here's the clever bit. The disks can either be displayed raised, so it is possible to see all of the disk labels without having to hunt about inside. However, when you want to pack up and take all your disks on holiday with you, a switch at the front allows them to be dropped level so the cover can be closed.

The *Micro Interface Disk Box* can be obtained direct from AMTIX! mail order at the handy price of £5.00, including post and packing, as opposed to the normal **£5.95** Just fill in the form below and make your cheques and postal orders payable to Newsfield Limited.

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

.... Postcode ....

Please send me .... disk box(es). I enclose a cheque/postal order for £........... (£5 per box).

Send your order forms to:
DISK BOX OFFER,
AMTIX!, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire. SY8 1DB.

PLEASE DEBIT MY VISA/ACCESS ACCOUNT
I wish to pay by Visa/Access (delete as applicable)

Signature

Expiry Date

Please Charge My Account No:

Name

Card Holder's Address

Postcode

ROD HULL'S MUSIC

Gremlin Graphics have moved away from their more usual mainstream games programs. They've come up with something which, although not new, is a good version on the music utility theme.

Instead of using icons, this program reverts to good old highlight bars to select each option. Unlike some other programs, you can switch between tape and disk, therefore the music files produced are totally portable between tape and disk based machines.

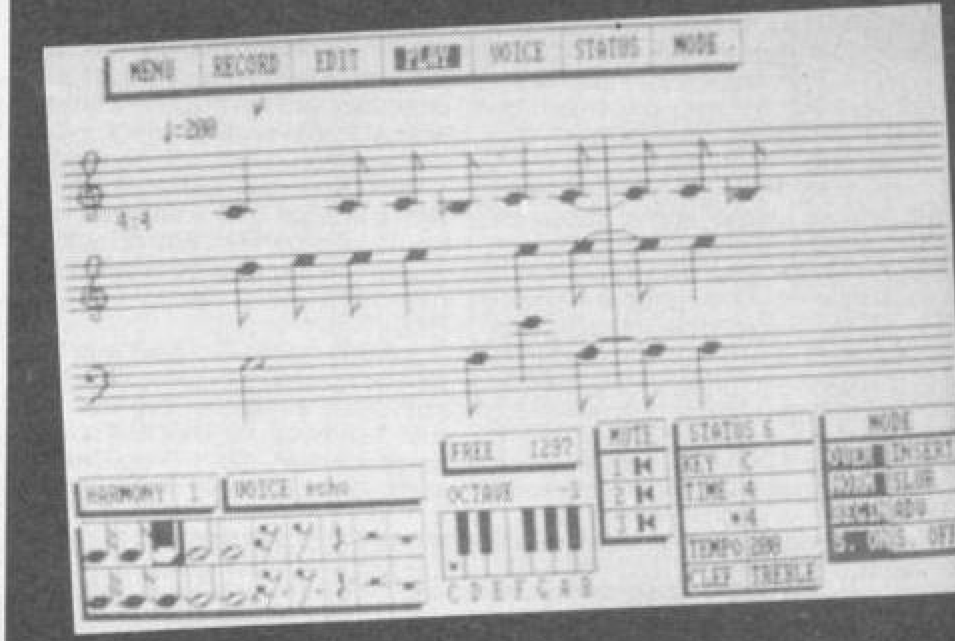
To produce sound effects you must go to the ENT or ENV options; these allow you to graphically change the wave pattern produced by the tone and volume envelopes. These values can then be combined in up to 32 differing voices. The demonstration voices included in the package range from flute to bell, though through experimentation it is possible to make more realistic sounds than those supplied.

Music can be recorded in the same way as with *Music System*, either by using the cursor keys to transpose directly from a score, or by playing the keyboard 'organ style'. There is a metronome included to keep you in time when entering music via the keyboard. I found this method of entry very difficult, but then again my piano skills are minimal. The harmonies must be recorded one at a time, with those that are already recorded playing along with you. This way you could set up a backing track and tap away at the music as it plays along.

There are two different resolution levels, beginner and advanced. In beginner mode the shortest note is half the beat rate, so that in 4:4 time the shortest note is a quaver, or in 3:2 time the shortest note is a crotchet. The minimum rest period is equal to one beat. In advanced mode you need to be accurate at the tempo you wish to record. The shortest note and the shortest rest is a semi-quaver.

Music is loaded by choosing the SAVE/LOAD option from the main menu. This presents you with option to change the destination and source of the music/voices that you wish to load or save. The program doesn't automatically give you a directory of what is on the disk, this you must select for yourself.

The music option presents you with a screen consisting of a window showing the music in standard musical notation. There are several options available; the music creation and editing option which we have already covered, using the cursor keys to move the note to the correct position on the stave, or by direct entry using the keyboard as a piano. The Tempo can be changed to any number of crotchets per minute, the high end being about 188. The time signature can be set to any musically valid value, and determines what fraction of a semi-breve each beat represents. Therefore a time signature of 4:4 would mean four beats of 1/4 semi-breve duration (or four crotchets) per bar. A time signature of 3:2 means three beats of 1/2 semi-breve (or three minims)



MACHINE?

per bar.

The key signature defines set sharps or flats within a piece. Instead of placing a sharp or flat symbol next to every note that requires it, the symbol is instead placed at the start of the piece and is constant throughout unless there is a change, in which case the sign would go with the note in question to say that it was natural, sharp or flat.

Slurs, which tie together standard notes when a note of a non-standard duration is required, can also be included. For example a note with the duration of a combined minim and quaver is impossible to write using standard notation. You must therefore place a slur between the two, and so create a composite lasting the duration of the two notes added together. As you enter notes, the program automatically places bar lines in the correct places, though this option can be switched off.

Music can be played in one of two ways. If the scrolling option is left on, music is shown a bar at a time as it is played. This can lead to a slight delay, but this is really only noticeable when the music is quite fast. Turning the option off results in a better rendition of the music. The scrolling option is ideal for spotting errors in a piece as well as having a nice visual effect. If you are using the scroll option as a "debugger", you may only want to hear one specific harmony. A feature of this program allows this by making it possible to switch on and off any of the three channels.

What is the use of a music utility if the program is not going to generate independent pieces, which will play without you having to load the main package (for example in a game)? In order to get around this, the program will save a series of RSX's that allow you to do just that. A further parameter can be added to this command that will send standard Amstrad music codes to the RSX's, and so make the piece pause or be flushed totally. To play a second piece of music you need only use the play command with a different name parameter, this will then add the piece to the queue and it will wait its turn, alternatively, you can also send a flush command and the next piece will start to play immediately.

It is hard to decide if *EMU* is better than *The Music System*, its closest rival. The latter is much more user friendly than *EMU*, but does not allow you to play the tunes from BASIC. Overall I would say that *EMU* is one of the best music utilities to come out on the Amstrad, and as such is worth investing in. It costs £14.95 on cassette and an extra fiver on disk and is produced by Gremlin Graphics.

PLAYING WITH WORDS

If you talk to anyone who has used a word processing package for a number of years, the odds are they have been using *Wordstar*. Our education expert, DAVID PAUL, analyses this program

The *Wordstar* program from the software house **MicroPro** was the first word processing package to take the business world by storm — it had the advantage of being widely available on CP/M and had more features than its rivals, the fact was, if you were into word processing — you were into *Wordstar*.

Features that helped make *Wordstar* famous were the program's extensive use of on-screen menus together with on-screen explanations of many of the word processing operations. It was also a **WYSIWYG** (What you see on screen is what you get on the printout) program when many others were not. **MicroPro** stressed the **WYSIWYG** and on-screen formatting aspect heavily in their early publicity and this strong selling point helped the program sell in its thousands — and it was not cheap.

Another feature of the program is its use of the computer disk to hold files with only a small proportion in RAM making it possible to print out a file whilst using another part of RAM to work on another file.

Wordstar also had a number of add-on packages to go with it, spelling checkers, indexing programs, sorting programs and a mail-merge facility. Many *Wordstar* ancillary programs were available (and still are) on **Public Domain** . There is even a program which, when added to the main program, will analyse a writer's style — but only if you are the kind of writer that doesn't mind being criticised by your computer.

LOTS OF RIVALS

Today *Wordstar* has many rivals but is still established as 'the' word processing program, but computers and software have changed and *Wordstar* has changed along with them. The stated policy of **Micropro International** is one of continual improvement so later versions of the program will have some enhancements. Compatibility however, should not be a problem. If you are used to an old version of *Wordstar*, changing to another version when updating your computer should not present difficulties.

One of the latest versions of this famous word processing program is *Pocket Wordstar* which runs on the CPC 6128 with only one disk drive. At around £49 this version costs a fraction of the original asking price of not so long ago and is priced at little more than some of its imitators and rivals. So, how does the program look to Arnold users?

Whilst early *Wordstar* manuals were notoriously difficult to understand the new documentation with *Pocket Wordstar* is well presented and easy to follow.

The various stages of getting to know the program are set out in a small A5 ring binder, in the American fashion each of the ten sections has its own separate page numbering so that reference to any item in the 115 pages of the main manual is done by section number followed by page number — which can mean a lot of page turning. There is a comprehensive clear index and a handy reference card of the 165 commands open to you. The ring binder also includes the 35 page manual together with the index for the *MailMerge* program included with this version of *Pocket Wordstar*.

To operate the 165 commands a system of one-key, two-key and three-key operations are used. One key commands mean simply hitting a single letter key, two-key commands involve the control key and a letter key, to enter a three-key command you must hold down the control key while you press a first letter key; release the control key then press the second letter key — not difficult after a little practise.

For controlling cursor movement whilst working on a text page the keys E,X,S,D,F, are used. These keys form a diamond shape of the keyboard, the letter at each point of the diamond indicating the direction of cursor movement e.g. Control S to move the cursor left one character and Control D to move one character right.

RUNNING THE PROGRAM

To enter *Wordstar* you must first run CP/M Plus then type 'ws', the disk will load and present the Opening Menu with the file and system commands and, if available, any *Wordstar* options such as *Mailmerge* or *Spellstar*. The single letter 'D' will open a document file and at the same time present a screen explaining the editing keys and how to name and handle files. If your file name has not been entered previously the screen message 'New File' will automatically appear.

After working on your document the three key command — CONTROL K D — will store the current file and return you to the Opening Menu. It is now possible to print out the file by going to the Print Menu and going through the various options for print effects (subscript, superscript, underline, pitch, etc.).

At this stage three of the seven menus have been used, the Opening Menu, Main Menu and the Print Menu. Other menus available are:— Quick Menu, Block Menu, Onscreen Menu and Help Menu. The Quick Menu lists commands that activate other commands until certain conditions are met, the Block Menu enables you to manipulate blocks of text, the Onscreen Menu lists commands for formatting text and the Help Menu is a brief guide to *Pocket Wordstar* with the facility of being able to set the level of onscreen assistance.

Section Two of the manual explains the function of each option on the various menus, a menu map of *Wordstar* would appear as:—

AM-TECH

The *Pocket Wordstar* Menu Map.

```
c9*OPENING MENU*
c?:
c?:
c:*MAIN MENU*
c?:
c?:
*******************************************
************* : c! : : : : :
*ONSCREEN MENU* :
*PRINT MENU* :
*BLOCK MENU* :
*QUICK MENU*:
* HELP MENU*:
```

RE-ARRANGING DRAFTS

Most writers at some time need to re-arrange drafts of their work, the old cut and paste (literally) methods of the hack with the green eye shade pounding away at his typewriter have been replaced by the word processor's electronic cut and paste — the block move. *Pocket Wordstar* enables you to mark a block text which may be one word or several pages long and delete or place it elsewhere in the text to the position at which you have placed the cursor. The program can also handle the column shaped blocks for dealing with columns of numbers.

The block moves work smoothly and the search and replace facility to find a word or phrase in the text file and replace it with a word or phrase of up to thirty characters is efficient.

Fast global operations to search the whole file are also possible, using this a writer can create a file of research notes and call them up by entering the keyword for transferring to the main body of text whenever needed.

Headers and Footers — the single lines of text which you might wish to appear in the top and bottom page margins are also dealt with as are page breaks to start printing on a new page, tabs and indentations.

Paragraphs can be re-formed within new margin settings and you can hyphenate at the end of lines. There is the option to add either hard or soft hyphens. A soft hyphen connecting a word split by a line end will disappear when text is re-arranged whilst a hard hyphen entered as part of a hyphenated word will remain.

Do you need such a powerful word processor? If you only type the occasional letter then a less powerful program might suit you better, but remember that a writer sat at his/her word processor for long periods soon become proficient with even the most powerful program. Publishers will tell you that many authors submit work to them produced by a version of *Wordstar*. If you take your writing seriously then *Pocket Wordstar* should take you as far as you want to go.

LETTERTECH

The letters have started to flow again. A few of these letters that have just arrived on my desk have some postmarks up to a month old, well at least everything is back to normal. Remember that as well as using the usual address, you can also send your letters using our PRESTEL Mailbox service on 1058455852. I pick up most mailboxes on a Wednesday, (when my modem works) and will try to reply to all immediately.

I CAN ONLY MAKE IT WITH 8 AT A TIME!

Dear Tony,
Firstly a suggestion. Would it not be popular with many of your readers if you started a regular feature on communications? On PRESTEL or Micronet 800, or reviews of the many free bulletin boards. Secondly a plea. I recently bought *Discovery Plus* (which you reviewed in your last issue), and came across a stumbling block – when using TD1, you have to type in the name of the cassette file to be transferred, but the name must be no longer than 8 characters. What do I do with names such as *Spindizzy*, which exceeds this limit? Even if you don't print this, please reply, I am in desperate need of help from someone knowledgeable about these things.
Julian Cater, East Sheen, London.

The idea of running a feature on communications has long been an argument here at The Towers. As the number of people who read AMTIX! and have modems is quite few, we would be writing for a minority. But what I do hope to do is start running a few features on the comms world, one other possibility is that we may run a Newsfield bulletin board of our own, but that idea is still in its early stages. You seem to have forgotten that TD1 is for transferring headerless files. You must first transfer the loader program to disk using option two, but after that the filename for the disk is up to you. So just give it an 8 letter filename and the program should do the rest. A few people have phoned me to say that *Discovery* would not work with ROMs on board. I have a Modem House coms software on ROM along with *Utopia*, The Amstrad RS232, the *Mirage Imager*, the *Multiface Two* and BCPL backed onto my machine, and find that by disabling any ROMs that are present I can get it to work. All utilities from Arnor have a ROMOFF command which works by giving the RSX a list of the ROMs to be turned OFF, and not a list of the ROMs to leave on, as one irate caller was trying to tell me.

NEVADA DESERT IN LIVERPOOL

Dear Tony
I am a desperate man. In last year's December issue, you published a recommended COBOL package called *NEVADA COBOL*. I have tried every computer shop in Liverpool, but they don't know what I am talking about, and just look at me strangely! Please, Please publish an address where I can obtain one (and how much it will cost) and relieve me of my misery.
Mark Lynch, Kirkby, Merseyside.

Uncle Tony to the rescue, my copy of COBOL has floated away when I moved to Ludlow, but as luck would have it one of my friends from the east is getting me the address which I will forward to you and print in the mag. I got my copy through him you see.

AM I ALL ALONE?

Dear Sir
I own a PCW8512 and read several computer magazines regularly, including yours. About a month ago whilst on my way to work, I stopped off to buy your magazine. A few moments after leaving the shop a gentleman walking alongside me saw that I was an Amstrad owner, and asked me if I knew of any clubs in the Leicester area. I would like to know if there any any clubs or societies in this area or if anyone would be interested in joining me and starting one. Anyone interested in the idea can contact me at the following address.
D Meadows, 77 Melrose Rd, Thrigstone, Leicestershire.

Having lived not too many miles away from Leicester I do know of one club, though you cannot really count it as local. It is the Nottinghamshire Microcomputer Club which meets every Monday at the Nottingham Congregational Centre, across from Marks and Spencers, which is just off the main paved way down to the Broadmarsh shopping centre. It might also be worth looking at this month's User Club Pages in AMTIX! on page 68.

LOSING BRANCHES OF MY FAMILY TREE

Dear Sirs,
I have read your article on the **DK'Tronics** memory expansion board in the January issue with interest, but I must confess to being a complete amateur at programming so I did not entirely understand it. I have a CPC464 on which I have loaded the data-base program listed in the Amstrad Book 2 by Sean Gray, and adapted it to store family trees using 10 fields. Unfortunately when it is loaded it only leaves room for 100 records and when a sort is done with more than 50 records the program just hangs. I wondered if the **DK'Tronics** memory would be suitable to extend the data area.
J Conway, Swanscombe, Kent

The program that you have may seem to hang for a long time due the amount of time it takes to sort a file and because the interpreter will be doing garbage collection to save memory. This function takes around 15 seconds and may be done several times when sorting takes place. A method of shortening this period is to put a few variable=FRE(0) which forces garbage collection and so speeding up the program when large amounts of data are to be handled. The DK Tronics memory will extend your database but you will have to rewrite a fair chunk of code to use it, especially the sort routine. If you are willing to try writing the program yourself, you will learn a great deal about file handling and the machine in general.

Yes, I'm sorry but that's it. There seems to be a general lack of technical letters flowing into the Towers at present so if I don't have any technical enquiries I can not answer them. Bye for now.

THE GREAT ROLY POLY COMP

WIN! AN EDGE MEGA BAG OF GOODIES

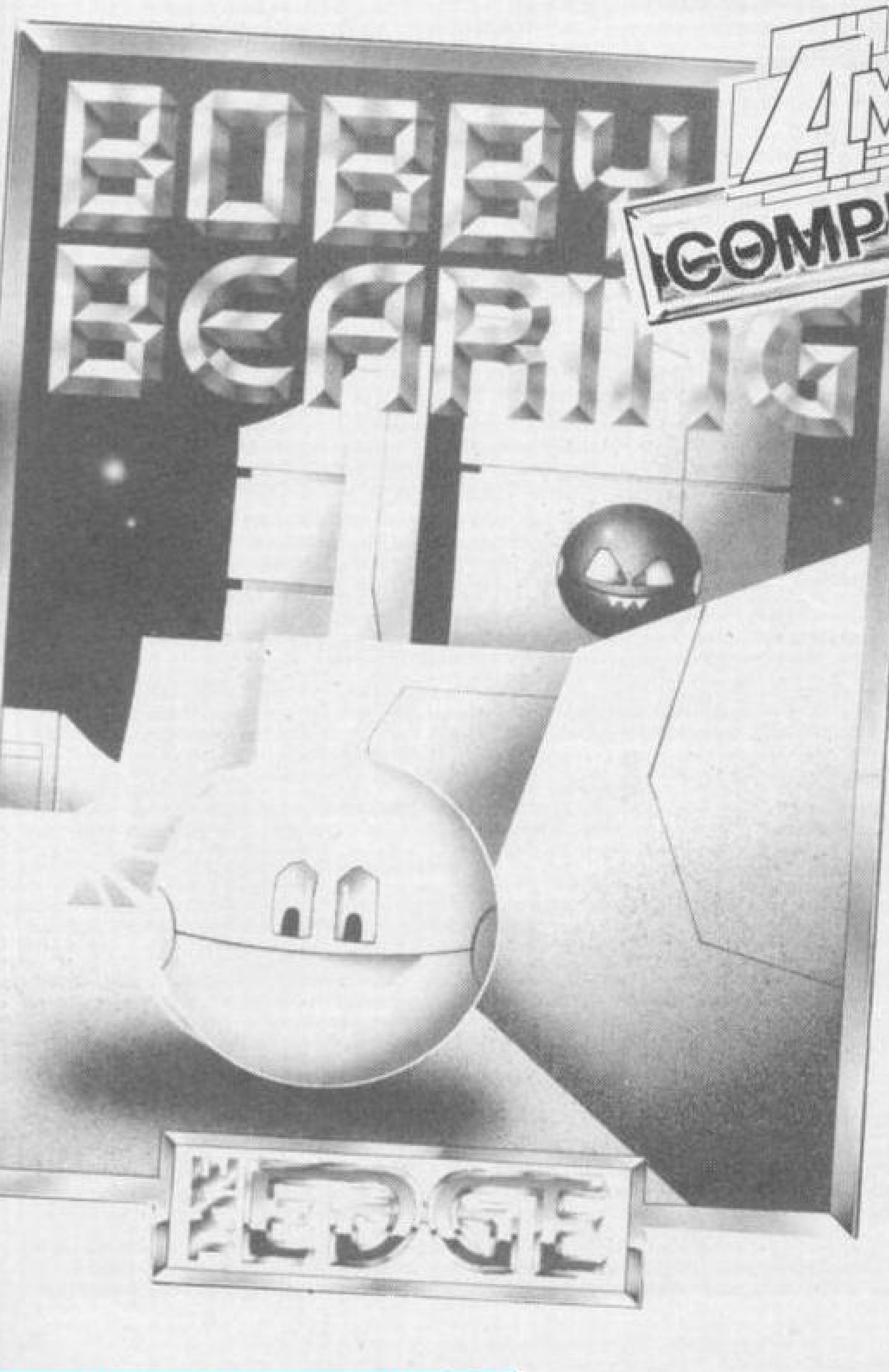
50 COPIES OF BOBBY BEARING UP FOR GRABS TOO!

That lovely Cherri Langdell, big stilton at The Edge, has been an absolute sweetie recently. Not only did she provide AMTIX! readers with the very first look at *Bobby Bearing* but now she wants to give a sackfull of them away. Not only that but for the first prize winner she'll provide them with an Edge T-Shirt, a copy of *Bobby Bearing*, a copy of *Palitron*, a copy of *Fairlight* and a brand new Edge pen – Wow!. The fifty runners up will each recieve a copy of *Bobby Bearing*. Good eh?

The game features one of the roliest poliest characters ever in the shape of *Bobby Bearing* who is, quite obviously, spherical. With this facet he's able to roll around the Metaplanes (A world of curvispace 3D) and rescue his mischievous brothers who are lost there. Poor little sausages!

Well, to get in some practice for Bearing searching little ol' me has devised a bearing-square-search for you to battle away at. Unfortunately I asked the Grumlins to write out the words that you'll find in the word square but being the sort of uneducated creatures that they are they've spelt all the words wrong in the list. Luckily I managed to correct them for the square, but you'll have to sort them out in the list.

Now send your entries to The Bobby Bearing Up Competition, AMTIX! Towers, P O Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB, to arrive no later than the 5th February.



AMTIX! COMPETITION

GRUMLIN'S LIST

AMTICS
CURVESPASE
METAPLAES
TEKNOFEER
FAIRLITE
ROL
BARNABIE
ACOLADE
NASTTE
BOOBY
BAERING
EDDGE

C U R V I S P E D G E C T
B A A R A V E T N C A B H
A Z B D E J B E A R I N G
S A F F R O N P S G N H I
E C F L D S S F T L A Z L
N G Q L X I T M A M S T R
A R H O V K X Y R S T I I
L I J R V L B O B B Y J A
P T U V M W N A O L K P F
A C C O L A D E R D I E I
T O D S U R A G A N N N O
E I L O V E T O N I A T Y
M K N O T C H E E S E B E
H E L L O B O B A A X A Y

Name ....
Address ....
....
....

STRATEGIC RE-DEPLOYMENT

You march in a north-easterly direction from the soggy Ludlow Marshes, toil across the Pennines, and eventually you reach the green (well, not at the moment) and sunny (well, not always) Forest Of Sherwood. This is where we have set up the new base camp for this column. Securely camouflaged in a leafy (well, starting next May) glade, you will find the two newly recruited commanders of his column, Owen and Audrey Bishop. Welcome to Sherwood camp, dear readers!

On setting up camp, we debated about asking the Editor to let us put up a brand new sign at the entrance – STRATEGY and TACTICS. But, on second thoughts, the old STRATEGY sign still has a little more wear left in it, in spite of its four-and-two-half bullet holes. A pity not to display it a bit longer! Also, most people use the word "strategy" to cover wargames of all kinds, even if this is very wrong of them, as we shall now try to make clear.

Strategy is mainly to do with marshalling an army or armies, getting hold of supplies for the army and the civilians, influencing governments in any way, influencing public opinion in your own country as well as in the enemy country, in fact doing anything that will help you attain your own ends.

Tactics is about the control of troops that are in actual contact with enemy troops. Bloodshed is almost inevitable, even if surrender comes quickly. Most wargames, including all those reviewed in this column in the past three issues, are tactical. Troops and weapons are deployed in the most favourable position, depending on factors such as terrain, supply, and the disposition of the enemy troops. The aim of each player is to render the enemy ineffective.

Just to point up the differences between the two we have a game of each type for review this month. *Annals of Rome* is definitely in the strategic camp. It makes a refreshing change from all the tactical games we have looked at recently.

Some people prefer the cut and thrust of the tactical game of which *Rebel Star* is a clear example. Which kind of game do your prefer? Write and let us know!

ANNALS OF ROME

PSS: CPC series: £12.95 cass, £17.95 disk: PCW 8256 disk £24.95

MAP DISPLAY
BR
GE
BE
GA
RA
PA
DA
AL
NA
AR
IT
IL
TH
HI
CA
GR
SA
AS
ME
SI
CR
CP
CY
AF
Regions
IT Italia
AF Africa
GA Gallia
GE Germania
GR Graecia
AS Asia
ME Mesopotamia
AE Aegyptus
Iudaea
Cyprus

Now to see what a strategic game is all about! According to the boldly printed message in the cover blurb 'YOUR PRIME OBJECT IS SURVIVAL'. Mere survival turned out to be a challenging task! *Annals of Rome* is a game for one player, taking charge of Rome in 273 BC, when it was only just the size of modern Italy, building it up to an Empire covering most of Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East, and holding it a that size against the ravaging hordes of Barbarians and others who successfully destroyed it in the early centuries AD. The game follows the course of history in general terms, but you, given enough skill, cunning, foresight, dogged determination and an occasional dash of military luck, can alter the course of history enough to prevent Rome's final decline and fall.

The game comes in a book-format case, and is accompanied by a detailed Manual of 18 pages in A5 size. Apart from the numerous and mildly irritating spelling errors and the order of presentation, the Manual contains all you need to know, and a great deal of explanation and background detail as well.

The initial screens of the game load quickly and leave you with an annotated map of the region to study while the remainder of the game is loading. The map, which is clear and neat, occupies about a third of the screen, the rest of the screen being used to display information relevant to the different phases of the game. It would have been more helpful if the list of abbreviations of the 28 region names in Table 1 of the Manual and on the loading screen had been in alphabetical order.

The game consists of a number of game-turns, each of which represents a period of between 1 and 25 years. The dates of the beginning and end of the current period are displayed at top right of screen. You get one chance in each turn to issue your orders; if the period is a long one, plan carefully. Twenty-five years means up to 25 battles. Events can dramatically alter the face of the Mediterranean world before you are next able to exercise influence on it.

Each turn consists of 5 phases. The start-Save phase is the first after loading and is repeated at the start of each game-turn. You can begin a new game, load an old game previously saved to tape or disk, save the current game, or simply continue with the current game.

At this stage you study the map to see which regions are controlled by which armies, and the size of these armies. The display also shows the population size of each region. This is related to the area of each region and it is from this population that taxes are raised and the army is recruited. The greater the area controlled by Rome, the greater the army it can maintain. After working out the popularity phase you progress to the Economics one. Then comes the Personnel Display Phase which lists all the members of the Roman Senate by name and also indicates their ability, their loyalty and their age.

Younger members are elected at the Senate each turn, to keep up the numbers. In the Personnel Assignment Phase you post members to regions occupied by your armies, and appoint army commanders. Next comes the Loyalty Phase in which you again see the list of the Senate and are told which, if any, are plotting rebellion. You are given the chance to bribe the armies to persuade them to remain loyal.

In combat, the Roman legionnaires rank high. Soldiers of other armies, such as Vandals, rank equal to the Legionnaires but those of some others, such as the Gauls, rank much lower. All the information you require is tabulated in the Manual. A Roman army can safely take on a Gallic army twice its size. This is a realistic assessment since the battle-line of the Gallic army consisted of brave but foolhardy men who fought naked apart from a gold band on their wrist and a gold collar.

Eventually you are returned to the Start-Save Phase to take stock. The computer evaluates your success as a commander and displays your score. Playing for the

maximum score is one way of measuring your skill but, as the Manual suggests, it is probably better to see how long you can survive before the Empire is destroyed by the Gauls, Sleucids, Goths, Vandals, Huns, Turks or any of the 30 other armies all anxious to do you down over the centuries.

Presentation	72%
Graphics	70%
Complexity	83%
Authenticity	85%
Opponent	77%
Lastability	78%
Value for money	50%
Overall	77%

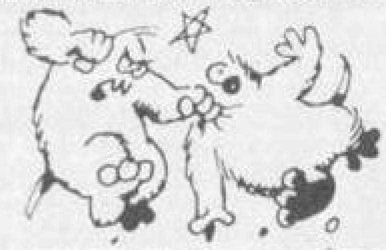
REBEL STAR

Firebird: CPC series, £1.99 cass

And now for something entirely different, a SciFi tactical skirmish wargame. You command a party of raiders attacking Moonbase Delta with the aim of destroying its ISAAC computer. The base is a labyrinth of corridors, rooms of various sizes and functions (crew quarters, generator rooms, store rooms, armoury), and the computer is at the heart of the base. Your party, consisting of 14 humans, and 3 robots (droids) to blast down some of the tougher doors, has a hard and hazardous task ahead. Starting from the three air-lock entrances you have to battle against the human and 'droid' base operatives, who are defending the base, to reach the central computer. Before them, if you are successful in deactivating the three Laser Defence Computers, your party is reinforced.

This being a skirmish-level game, the units represent single humans or robots. Judging by their names, the raiders are an internationally recruited band. Each has his (or her) own ratings for morale, stamina, endurance, weapon skill, combat skill, and agility. Each carries one or more weapons, of which there are several types including laser gun, laser pistol, light sabre, and autorifle. Each weapon has its own specification – range, ammunition, accuracy, skill factor, damage, deterioration. Table or board wargamers will recognise that this game has all the ingredients of a well thought out full-scale skirmish wargame.

Though units start off with good morale and stamina, after being attacked they can panic and become unable to fight. After a particularly active turn they can become tired and unable to move at full speed. A turn represents about 30 seconds of real time. But this is not a hustling game – you can take as long as you like to think out your tactics and move the units accordingly. In each turn each unit has a given number of Action Points. These can be used for moving about the base, firing, picking up objects, dropping objects, reloading weapons and so on. There are several kinds of objects scattered around the base: spare weapons and ammo clips, medi-probes (to heal wounded humans), coffee tokens, and keys are just a few examples.

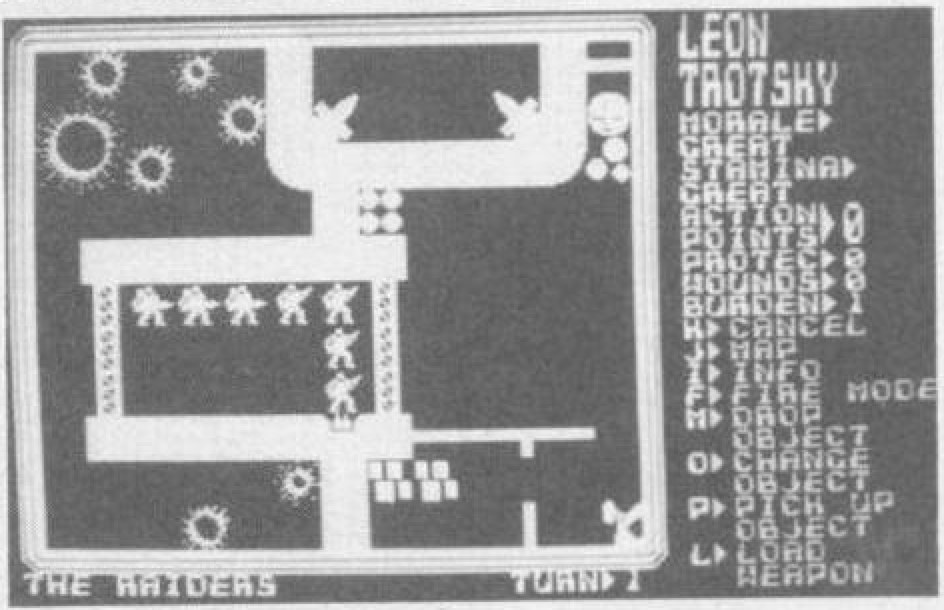


The graphics are excellent. The boldly drawn large-scale terrain map scrolls quickly and smoothly in all directions, including diagonally. The map features are easily interpreted and, as a bonus, a message tells you what is under the cursor. Messages range from 'Algae tank' and 'Control panel' to 'Shower' and 'Lavatory' (Yes, the base has all mod cons!). In the heat of battle we never got round to finding out what happens if a unit picks up a coffee token and presents it to one of the many coffee dispensers. Unit symbols are varied, well drawn and clearly show the type of weapon or other object carried. All movement on the screen is fast, and accompanied by distinctive and helpful sound effects. The firing routine, as indeed all other aspects of the mechanics of play, is clearly prompted, is easy to learn, and quickly and smoothly executed. At all stages a list of valid key-presses is on the screen. The playing map shows only a small area of the base in detail but, at any time, you can call up a small-scale map of the whole base, on which the positions of all units and an outline of the current play area are marked.

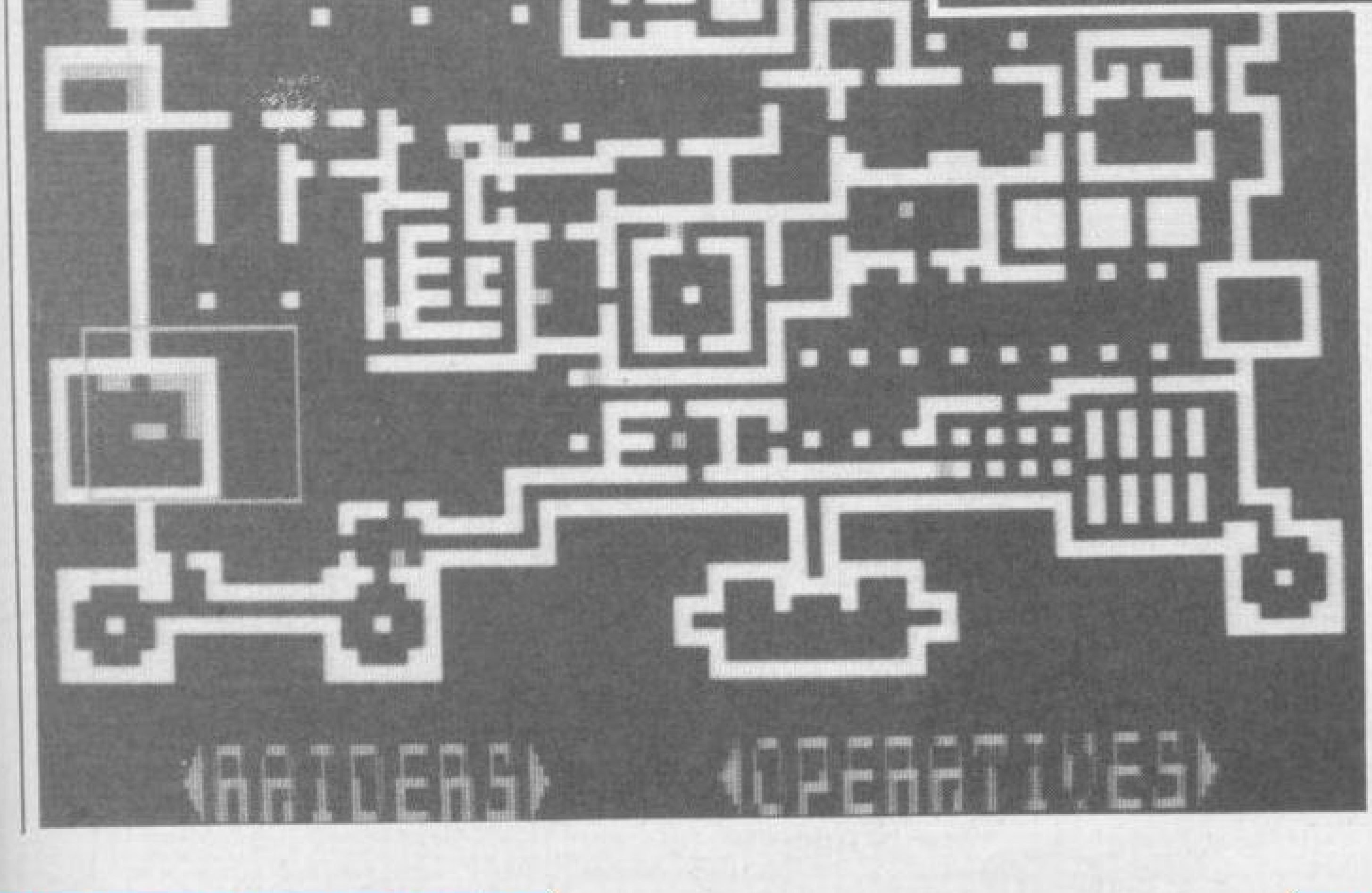
The game begins with a deployment phase. Riders are to be placed in any of the 3 air-locks while (in the two-player game) Operatives may be deployed in specified areas of the base. After this, the game proceeds turn by turn until the raiders are totally eliminated or ISAAC is destroyed.

The instructions are on the cassette case insert. They are brief but adequate, leaving you a little to discover as you play.

Rebel Star makes a fascinating and challenging game for two players, particularly as the opposing forces are different in composition and have different objectives. It is equally addictive and challenging as a single-player game.



There are 8 levels of difficulty (something we don't normally approve of in a wargame, but allowable in SciFi). Even at level 1 you are going to have a hard slog to get far into the base, let alone find your way through to ISAAC. The defenders are quick to locate and attack raiding units, with devastating results. It is vital to keep under cover as much as possible, and to be content to make small advances from room to room. This is a game that will occupy you for hours.



Presentation	65%
Graphics	92%
Complexity	88%
Authenticity	80%
Opponent	90%
Lastability	80%
Value for money	95%
Overall	89%

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN A SET OF 16 ASTERIX TITLES Courtesy of Melbourne House

AMTIX! COMPETITION

Fifty Copies of the Game up for grabs as well!

Obelix may be very gentle when he's handling his small puppy, but he certainly doesn't know his own strength when it comes to cauldrons. You see, he's just gone and broken Getafix's favourite cooking utensil – the cauldron he uses to brew the magic potion that makes the Gauls invincible when the Romans come to call on their small village.

Not having any potion will not worry Obelix because he fell into the potion when he was young and is now permanently blessed with incredible strength. Unfortunately, the rest of village do not share in Obelix's good fortune.

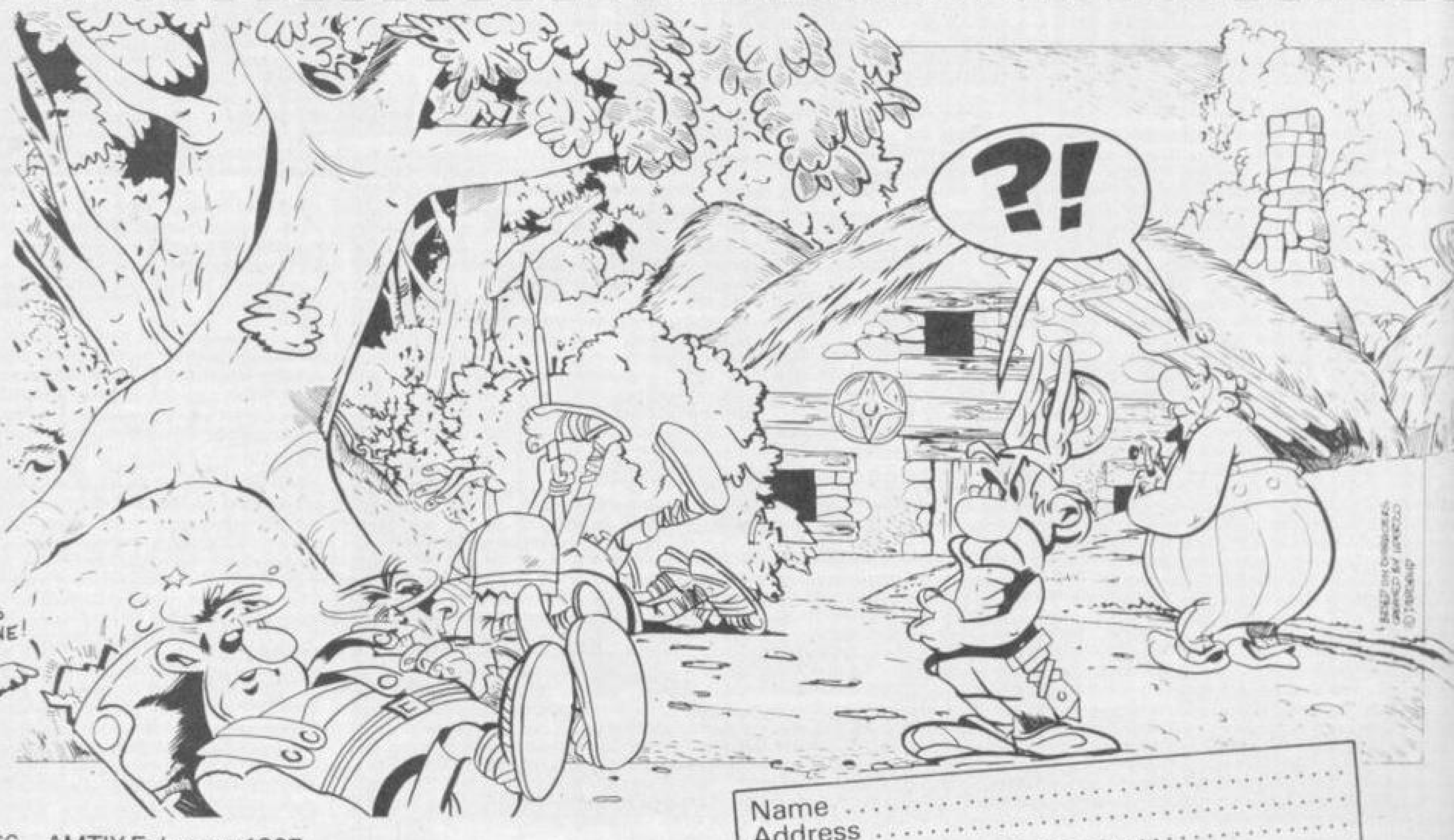
Vitalstatistix, the village leader, is particularly miffed and has sent out Asterix and Obelix to try and retrieve the seven pieces of cracked cauldron – not easy as they are spread all over the forest and our two heros are befuddled as to where to find them.

Well, **Melbourne House** have now put you firmly on the trail of the smashed bits in their new game *Asterix and the Magic Cauldron*, where you must help our reluctant heroes to find the lost pieces.

You could help them now, however, and possibly win a bumper bundle of 16 Asterix books that feature all of his friends in a variety of adventures – for instance *Asterix at the Olympics*, *Asterix the Gladiator* and *Asterix in Corsica* to name but a few – or be one of the lucky fifty runners up who will each receive a copy of the game.

All you have to do is to study the picture of the thoughtful Asterix and Obelix and put a ring around each of the seven pieces of magic cauldron that you can find.

Once you're marked all the bits, cut out the piccie (or photcopy it if you like – but only one entry per reader mind!) and send it off to, **ASTERIX COMP, AMTIX! Towers, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB to arrive here no later than the 5th February when the 51 entries will be drawn from Mummy Minion's very own cooking cauldron.**



Name ....

Address ....

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AMTIX! USER CLUB NEWS

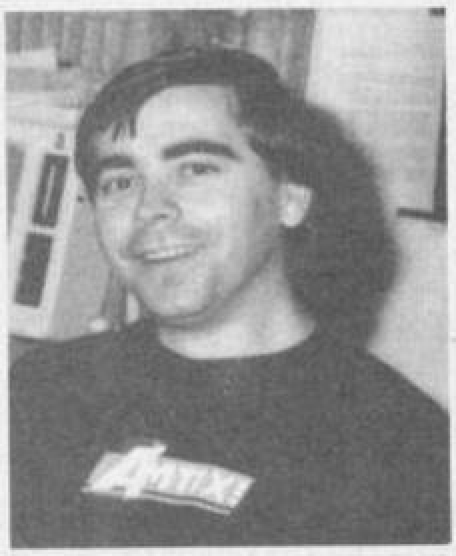
Welcome again to the page that refreshes the parts of user clubs other magazines can't reach. As I have said in the past the user club page is here to offer advice and help to newly formed, established, or planned organisations, and allows clubs to generally sound off about anything and everything.

AMTIX! wants to hear from user clubs the length and breadth of Britain. Indeed we welcome correspondence from organisations abroad as well. All you have to do is write a brief outline of your club's history and post the details to me. If you have any black and white pictures taken during a club meeting why not send them in. If they are good enough we will publish them. Got the idea? Good, then why are you waiting? Send in your articles and black and white pictures of club members, gatherings, etc, to me right now. The address, as always, is *Malcolm Harding, AMTIX! User Club Page, P O Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.

This issue sees the continuation of the regular user club directory. If you want to be included in this free service send in details post haste. Once again I am publishing more pen pal listings but there is always room for lots more so write in if you are interested and please send your full name and address and a phone number if you wish.

USER CLUB DIRECTORY

The User Club directory continues to grow at an alarming rate, thanks mainly to my friends at the Amstrad Group Federation who keep sending me listings they have acquired. Thanks Clint and Lesley! Even so I would welcome any more to add to the directory. Remember it will be published in every issue of AMTIX! Right here we go with the latest listing.



By Malcolm Harding

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MS CHRISTINE LINFOOT AMSTRAD CANTERBURY P O Box 23.079 Templeton, Christchurch, New Zealand

MS DEBBIE HOFFMAN SOUTHSIDE AMSTRAD USERS CLUB, P O Box 324, Bosnells 6110, Western Australia

EDDIE GOH CHENG, SINGAPORE AMSTRAD USERS CLUB B1K 216 Jurong, East Street, 21 04-523, SINGAPORE 2260

COMMUNITY COMPUTING, Church of Ascension, Hulme Walk, Hulme, Manchester M15 5FQ

MRS P T ARDRON, AMSWEST AMSTRAD USER GROUP 6 Weston Street, Carlisle 6101, West Australia

M CHRISTOPHE WAROUX, LE CLUB INFOMATIQUE BRUYSLEN LE CIB, 1 Rue Laterale 62470, Calonne Ricourart, Siege Social Bruay-en-Artois, France

P PATON, PATONS COMPUTER CLUB, 176 Todmorden Road, Burnley, Lancashire BB11 3EU

SIMON PORRITT, AMSTRAD USER SOFTWARE DATABASE 13 Woodbine Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE3 4EU

MR M J DYOS, ELLESMERE AMSTRAD USERS CLUB Ellesmere Port, South Wirral

MR J GREEN, ADVANTAGE COMPUTER USER GROUP, 33 Malyns Close, Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX9 4EW

MR J S BONE, ASSOCIATION OF COMPUTER CLUBS, Club Spot 810 c/o Claremont Place, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear

MR R MOBBERLEY, PCW USERS GROUP 37 Clifford Bridge Road, Binley, Coventry CV3 2DW

MR STUART WILLIAMS, WEST MIDLANDS AMSTRAD USER GROUP 26 Matlock Road, Lower Farm Estate, Bloxwich, Walsall, West Midlands WS3 3QD

MR DAVE CHAMBERS, BURNLEY CO-OP COMPUTER CLUB, 62 Moorland Road, Rosehill, Lancashire BB11 2NX

MR DEREK VERNON, THE NATIONAL INDEPENDENT AMSTRAD USER CLUB 1 The Middle Way, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 7E

MR A TOGHILL, TAFFS WELL CO-OP COMPUTER CLUB 45 Moy Road, Taffs Well, South Glamorgan

LONDON AMSTRAD USER CLUB Harrow Computer Group, Harrow Arts Centre, 356 High Road, Harrow Weald

MR P CHICK, CROYDON MICROCOMPUTER CLUB, Central Reference Library, Catherine Street, Croydon

PEN PALS WANTED

More and more readers want pen pals who are computer minded including the following:-

Neil Jones, aged 16, of 62 High Grove, Sea Mills, Bristol BS9 2NP, owns a CPC464 and wants to hear from fellow 464 owners aged between 15 and 18. He is interested in swopping tape software and basic programming.

Jensen A, of 7A Lovat Close, Neasden, London NW2 7RU, wants to hear from anyone who owns an Amstrad and lives in the Brent area. He is 16 years old and interested in anything to do with the micros.

Simon Gregson, aged 19, of 12 Byass Avenue, Bridlington, East Yorkshire YO16 5JG, owns a 6128 and wants to hear from any Amstrad owner, CPC or PCW, who is interested in swopping software and exchanging tips. He is interested in utilities and programming languages.

Martin Fagan, aged 15, of 10 Woodford Avenue, Monastry Road, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Eire, owns a CPC464, is interested in all kinds of games, and would like to hear from anyone interested in swopping games, pokes, playing tips and general information.

David Piddes of 11 Curlew Court, Wormley, Herts EN10 6JW, owns a 6128 and would like to swop games, pokes and tips.

Bradley Joy, aged 14, of 11 Grangeway, Smallfield, Horley, Surrey, RH6 9LZ, owns a CPC464 with disk drive, and is interested in both adventures and arcade games. He also wants to swop software, hints and tips with anyone aged between 13 and 15.

Mark Spencer aged 18, of 8 Standish Close, Sheffield S5 8XR, owns a 6128 and would like to hear from any hackers, from novice to expert, to swop hints and tips.

David McKeever of Hillhead, Tarbolton, Mauchline, Ayrshire, Scotland, who wants to hear from anyone with a Disc Wizard and owns a CPC6128.

Tony Gibbons of 136 Cameron Estate, Reheny, Dublin 5, Eire, who wants to hear from anyone anywhere. His interests are arcade games and programming in basic.

Chris Burton, aged 15, of Caretakers House, Whitstable C J School, Oxford Street, Whitstable, Kent CT5 1DO, would like to hear from anyone aged between 14 years and 17 years. He owns a CPC464 and has about 50 games.

Jason Stanway, aged 16, of 26 Newpool Road, Knypersley, Biddulph, Stone on Trent ST8 6NS, would like to swop software, hints, and tips on the Amstrad and general information with anyone.

Colin Naylor, aged 15, of Priory Club Flat, 410 Marton Road, Middlesborough TS4 2PQ, owns a CPC464 with green screen and has loads of software. He wants to hear from any girls aged between 14 and 18 living in the United Kingdom. He would also like to hear from any user club in Middlesborough.

Simon Field, aged 14, of 7 Rosafield Avenue, Halesowen, West Midlands B62 9BU, would like to hear from other CPC6128 owners who are interested in swopping tape or disk games and ideas. He also wants to know if there is a user club in Birmingham.

Michael Mellin, aged 14, of 4 Camden Street, Nelson, Lancashire BB9 0BL, owns an Amstrad CPC464 and would like to hear from any boy or girl.

Peter Cheong, aged 15, of Apartment BLK 252, Ang Mo K10, Avenue 4, 03-211, Singapore 2056, is interested in programming, swopping games, and solving adventure games. He likes both adventure and arcade games and would like to hear from anyone anywhere!

Jon Tyler, aged 16, of 26 Kensington Avenue, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR4 8BY, is interested in swopping tape games. He wants to hear from any CPC464 owners who are prepared to swop information and ideas.

Ashley Cotter-Cairns, aged 16, of 1 Langley Hill Close, Kings Langley, Herts WD4 9HB, wants to hear from other Amstrad owners interested in swopping such things as lists, tips and pokes.

Hayden Mallen, aged 13, who owns a CPC464, and lives at 80 Richmond Drive, Perton, Wolverhampton, West Midlands WV6 7RP. He wants to hear from girls or boys aged 13 to 14.

Alfred Hughes, aged 18, of 21 Guisborough Road, Thornaby, Cleveland TS17 8EE, wants to hear from other owners of CPC464 machines.

William Freeland, aged 16, of 15 John Humble Street, Mayfield, Dalkeith, Midlothian EH22 5QZ, would like a French pen pal who can write English.

Paul Boyall, aged 16, of 12 Main Road, Hundleby, Spilsby, Lincs PE23 5LS, would like to hear from boys or girls of his age who own an Amstrad.

Eamon Murray, aged 16, of 169 Cappaghmore, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, Eire, owns a CPC464 is interested in all software and would like to swop software, information, pokes etc.

Simon Martinez of 2 Vronhill Close, Off Fernhill Drive, Liverpool L8 8LB, also owns a 464 micro. He likes adventures and arcade games and is interested in helping others with tips and pokes, and also receiving same.

Jonathan Boyd, aged 14, of 18 Rydal Street, Frizington, Cumbria CA26 3PY, is 14 years old and owns a CPC6128. He would like to hear from anyone.

Robert Shepherd lives at 4 Trusthorpe Road, Sutton-on-Sea, Lincs Ln12 2LT, would like to hear from anyone – from punks to Prime Ministers!

Simon Davey, aged 18, of 22 Selkirk Street, Chaddesden, Derby DE2 6GL, is interested in contacting other CPC464 owners. They can be any age, and from any country as long as they write in English! He says he has loads of games to swop, and loads of maps to give away. He also has two adventures he has written himself with the Quill.

David McKeeves describes himself as a Multi Face Two owner. He lives at Hillhead, Tarbolton, Mauchline, Ayrshire KA5 5NT, and would like to swop games and tips.

Andrew Lawton, aged 21, of 3 Bridgeway East, Pentre Maelor, Wrexham, Clwyd LL13 9RB, would like to write to anyone of a similar age (plus or minus one year), either in the United Kingdom or abroad. He is interested in learning to hack progs and would welcome correspondence from anyone proficient in this 'art'. He has a CPC464 and DDI and likes most types of games.

Sergio Trigo Vasques, aged 16, owns a CPC6128, and lives at Rua General Silva Freire 151-4D, 1800 Lisbon, Portugal. He says there is little support for the Amstrad in his country and he would like to write to anyone, anywhere.

Michael Aldridge aged 16, of 105 Catherton, Stirchley, Telford TF3 1VX, owns a CPC464 and would like to hear from anyone else with a similar micro.

Finally **Mike** of 68 Silver Street, Wythall, Worcs B47 6LZ, forgot to include his surname but wants to hear from lots of people.

AMTIX! USER CLUB NEWS

MR D WILKINSON, SUTTON LIBRARY COMPUTER CLUB Central Library, St Nicholas Way, Sutton

MR D PETTET, NORTH KENT AMATEUR COMPUTER CLUB, Charles Darwin School, Jail Lane, Biggin Hill

MR B FORSTER, RICHMOND COMPUTER CLUB Richmond Adult College, Parkshot House, Richmond

MR M TEW, THANET CO-OP COMPUTER CLUB, 21 Wellis Gardens, Westbrook, Margate, Kent CT9 5RG

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AMSTRAD CLUB SCHWEIZ Kurt In-Albon Muhlackern CH-3931 Eggerberg Switzerland

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FREAK-SOFT-CLUB CPC 664, CPC 6128, MICHAEL ECKERT Zobelsreuther Strasse 30 8670 (Saale) Germany

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6128-und 664- Besitzer, MICHAEL DECKER Im Richelnberg 36 5166 Kreuzau, Germany

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S C C N-H-W-N-H-W Schneider Computer Club, OLIVER THIELE Am Kirchweg 49, 5908 Neunkirchen 5, Germany

S C C H Schneider Computer Club Hamburg, ALEXANDER SCHARF Heimfelder Strasse 60, 2100 Hamburg 90, Germany

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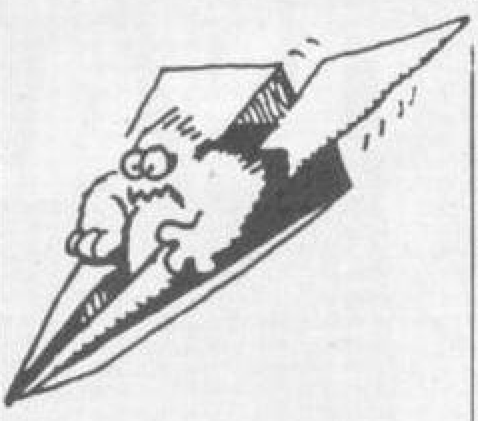

CPC 464 CLUB GRUNDUNG, Contact HEINZ ELBERS Wurttemberger Strasse 1 4460 Nordhorn Germany

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CPC CLUB MAGIC KEY, Contact, MICHAEL HOLLMAN Stamburger Strabe 46 2800, Bremen 1

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JOYCE USER CLUB Neugrundung, Contact, ARTHUR BORENS

WEST MIDLANDS AMSTRAD USER GROUP 26 Matlock Road, Lower Farm Estate, Bloxwich, Walsall WS3 3QD, West Midlands. Contact **STUART WILLIAMS** on 0922 406411

AUSD (AMSTRAD USER SOFTWARE DATABASE) P O Box 11, Gosforth, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE3 1RP

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ADVANTAGE USER GROUP 33 Malyn's Close, Chinnor, Oxfordshire OX9 4EW. Contact **JEFFREY GREEN**

NATIONAL INDEPENDENT USER CLUB, Wealdstone, Harrow, Middlesex.

SOUTHSIDE AMSTRAD USERS CLUB, P O Box 324, Gosnells 6110, Western Australia. Contact **DEBBIE HOFFMAN** Telephone 09-4598702

SOLENT AMSTRAD CLUB c/o 1 Dimond Close, Bitterne Park, Southampton SO2 4LF. Telephone Southampton 558075 after 5pm. Contact **BILL KENT**

BRIGHTON, HOVE AND DISTRICT COMPUTER CLUB, 19 Beach Green, Shoreham-by-Sea, Sussex BN4 5YG. Telephone 0273 463111. Contact **GEORGE SEARS**

CAMELCLUB Wellpark, Willeys Avenue, Exeter. Telephone 0392 21189. Contact **JOHN KENEALLY**

NEW ZEALAND CLUBS

TARANAKI AMSTRAD USER'S CLUB, Contact: HUGH WILSON, C/O PowerCorp, 71 Brougham Street, P O Box 370, New Plymouth, Ph 88-526 Work, Ph 67-612 A/H.

WHANGAREI AND MID NORTHLAND USER'S CLUB, Contact: MIKE RICKETT, Utopia Road, RD1 Paparoa, Northland, Ph PAP 37060.

FRANKLIN AREA AMSTRAD USER'S CLUB, Contact: MR C A MACDONALD, 22 Totara Street, Waiuku Ph 58183 WKU.

NEW PLYMOUTH AMSTRAD USER CLUB, Contact: F G SOUSTER, 5 Taunton Place, New Plymouth, Ph 86501.

SOUTH AUCKLAND AUC, Contact: J V BUCKTON, 14 Cockle Bay Road, Howick, Auckland, Ph 5346744.

AUCKLAND CENTRAL AMSTRAD USER GROUP, Contact: MR S K AICKIN Ph 864-002, Mr Dennis Siddens Ph 836-7583, Mr John Drummond Ph 836-8317, 27 Maryland Street, Point Chevalier, Auckland 2.

TOKOROA AMSTRAD USER'S CLUB, Contact: STAN WALTON - Chairman, C/O 30 Benella Street, Tokoroa, Ph 65-491.

NORTH SHORE AMSTRAD USER'S CLUB, Contact: CHRIS FRANCE, C/O The Computer Terminal, 257 Hinemoa Street, Birkenhead Auckland, Ph 419-0543 Wk, Ph 478-1762 A/H.

AMSTRAD CHRISTCHURCH, Contact: CHRISTINE LINFOOT, Ph 897413, Ian Orchard, Ph 524-064, P O Box 24174 East Linwood, Christchurch.

CHORLEY COMPUTER CLUB, MR J MOORE, 3 Stanley Road, Farington, Preston, PR5 2RH.

WAKEFIELD AMATEUR COMPUTER CLUB, MR R QUARTON, 44 Whitley Spring Crescent, Ossett, West Yorkshire, WF5 0RE.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE COMPUTER CLUB, MR J CHILDS, 57 Manor Gardens, Buckden, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE18 9TW.

CONGLETON AND DISTRICT COMPUTER CLUB, MR G A HARRATT, 19 Walgrave Close, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 4TS.

MICROBEACON SUPPORTERS GROUP, MR J PALMER, Microbeacon Project, 29 Guthrie Street, Edinburgh, Scotland.

PRESTON COMPUTER CLUB (PACE), MR L HOWARTH, 41 St Walburge Avenue, Preston, Lancs, PR2 2QT.

WEST HERTS 80 USERS ASSOCIATION, MR B LARKIN, 82 Church Street, Lighton Buzzard, Beds, LU7 7BT.

AMSTRAD CLUB SCHWEIZ, Kurt In-Albon, Muhlackern, CH-3931, Eggerberg, Switerland.

COTAC CLUB, The Secretary, MR CONRAD HART, 48 Dover Road, Room 14, Wanstead, London, E12 5EA.

WESTERN SUBURBS AMSTRAD USERS GROUP,The Secretary, MR J JAMES, 36 Penong Street, Westlake, Brisbane 4074, Australia.

SYNTAX ERROR COMPUTER CLUB Nordhorn, (all computers), Contact: FRED WEBER, Laarstrabe 23, 4460 Nordhorn, Tel: 059-21-13149, Germany.

CPC CLUBGRUNDUNG ANGESTREBT, Contact: KREIS BORKEN

AMSTRAD NORTH WEST USER CLUB (ANWUC), 2 Stovell Avenue, Longsight, Manchester 12.

MR P PATON, PATONS COMPUTER CLUB, 176, Todmorden Road, Burnley, Lancs, BB11 3EU.

MR DAVE CHAMBERS, BURNLEY CO-OP COMPUTER CLUB, 62 Moorland Road, Rosehill, Lancashire, BB11 2NX.

MR M TEW, THANET CO-OP COMPUTER CLUB, 21 Wellis Gardens, Westbrook, Margate, Kent, CT9 5RG.

COMMUNITY COMPUTING, Church of Ascension, Hulme, Manchester, M15 5FQ.

AUSTRALIA

MRS P T ARDRON, AMSWEST AMSTRAD USER GROUP, 6 Weston Street, Carlisle, 6101, West Australia.

FRANCE

M. CHRISTOPHE WAROUX, Le Club Informatique Bruyslen, 1 Rue Laterale, 62470 Calonne Ricourart, Siege social, Bruay-en-Artois, France. .

GERMANY

SCHNEIDER-JOYCE-ANWENDERKREIS, Munster/Coesfeld sucht Mitglieder, Wolfgang Kurch, 4405 Nottuln, Germany.

CLUBRUNGDUNG, im Raum Hanau-Gelnhusen, Richard Luppert, Gartenstrasse 18, 6456 Langenselbold, Germany.

SCHNEIDER-JOYCE USER CLUB, Rhein-Main, A-Reichweinweg 6, 6097 Trebur 3, Germany.

CPC CLUB BORKEN, KARSTEN KAMMLER, Heinrich-Hertz-strasse 4, 4280 Borken-Gemen, Germany.

CPC USER CLUB-GRUNDUNG, 6128 and 664 Besitzer, SVEN MARTIN, Ostreubenstrasse 3, 3590 Bad Wildungen, Germany.

MICHAEL DECKER, Im Richelnberg 36, 5166 Kreuzau, Germany.

SCHNEIDER COMPUTER CLUB N-H-W, OLIVER THIELE, Am Kirchweg 49, 5908 Neunkirchen 5, Germany.

SCHNEIDER CPC CLUB BATREUTH, MARCO KONARD, Fontanestrasse 4, 8580 Bayreuth, Germany.

SCHNEIDER COMPUTER CLUB E V Postfach 1101, 4972 Lohne 1, Germany.

NEW ZEALAND

MS CHRISTINE LINFOOT, AMSTRAD CANTERBURY, P O Box 23,079, Templeton, Christchurch, New Zealand.

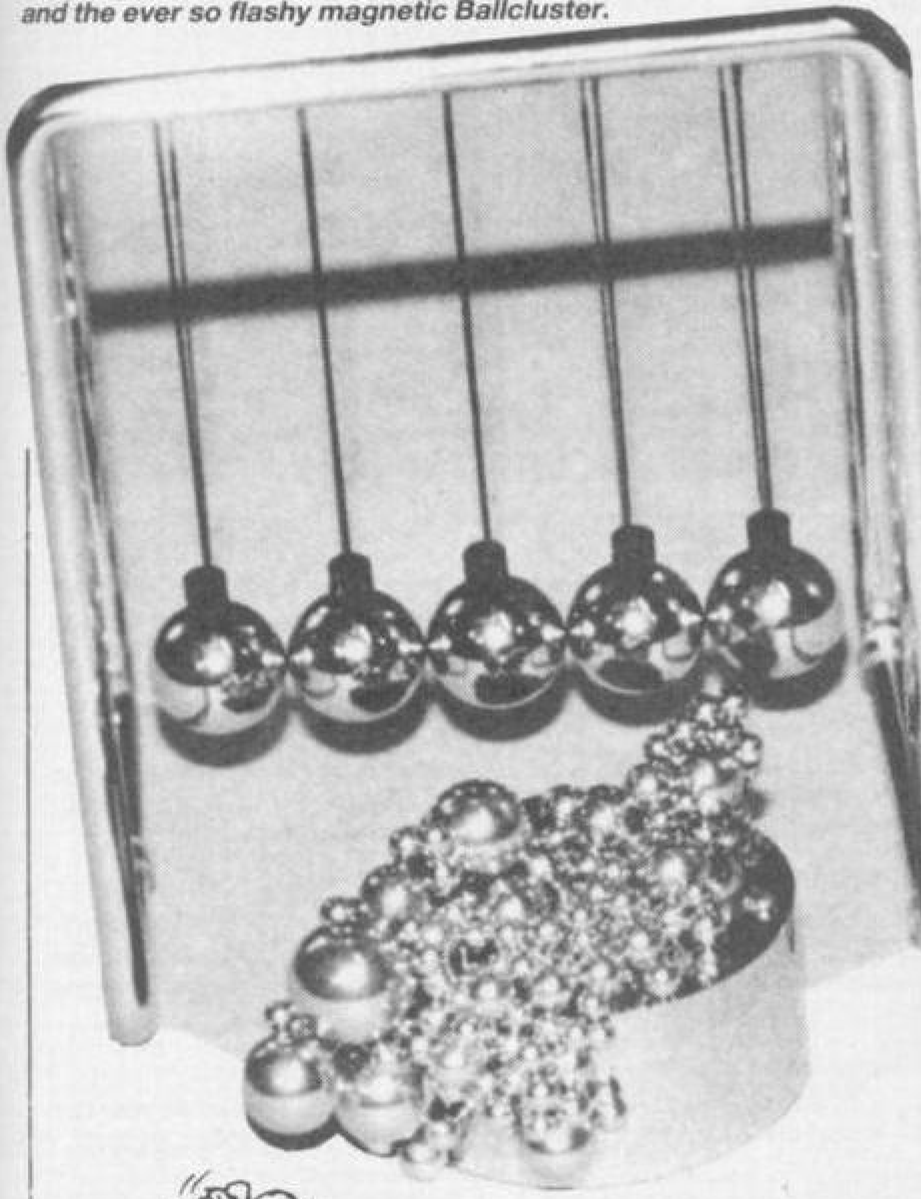
SWITZERLAND

CPC-USER-CLUB SCHWEIZ, KLAUS DIETER PREISS, Im Hof 20, CH-8637, Laupen, Switerland.

IMC SCHNEIDER CPC-CLUB, URS THONY, Pasch, CH-7214 Grusch, Switzerland.

USER CLUB IN DER SCHWEIZ, 464 Grundung!, CHRISTIAN STRABEL, Ruslerstrasse 3, CH-5452 O'rohrdorf, Switzerland.

CRL'S WALLS COME TUMBLING DOWN COMPETITION



The ever so executive looking Newton's Cradle and the ever so flashy magnetic Ballcluster.

AMTIX! COMPETITION

Wait a minute, what's happening here? Have those ever so luverly people down at the **CRL** headquarters gone a bit too far? PR stunts are one thing but knocking down their offices with a mega ball and chain to celebrate their first release of the New Year, *Ballbreaker*, seems slightly over the top, to say the least!

Ok, Ok, so *Ballbreaker* the game actually involves disintegrating walls with a well hard ball but not even Malcolm in a staggered state of alcoholic over-indulgence, comes up with zany ideas like this. Very strange indeed!

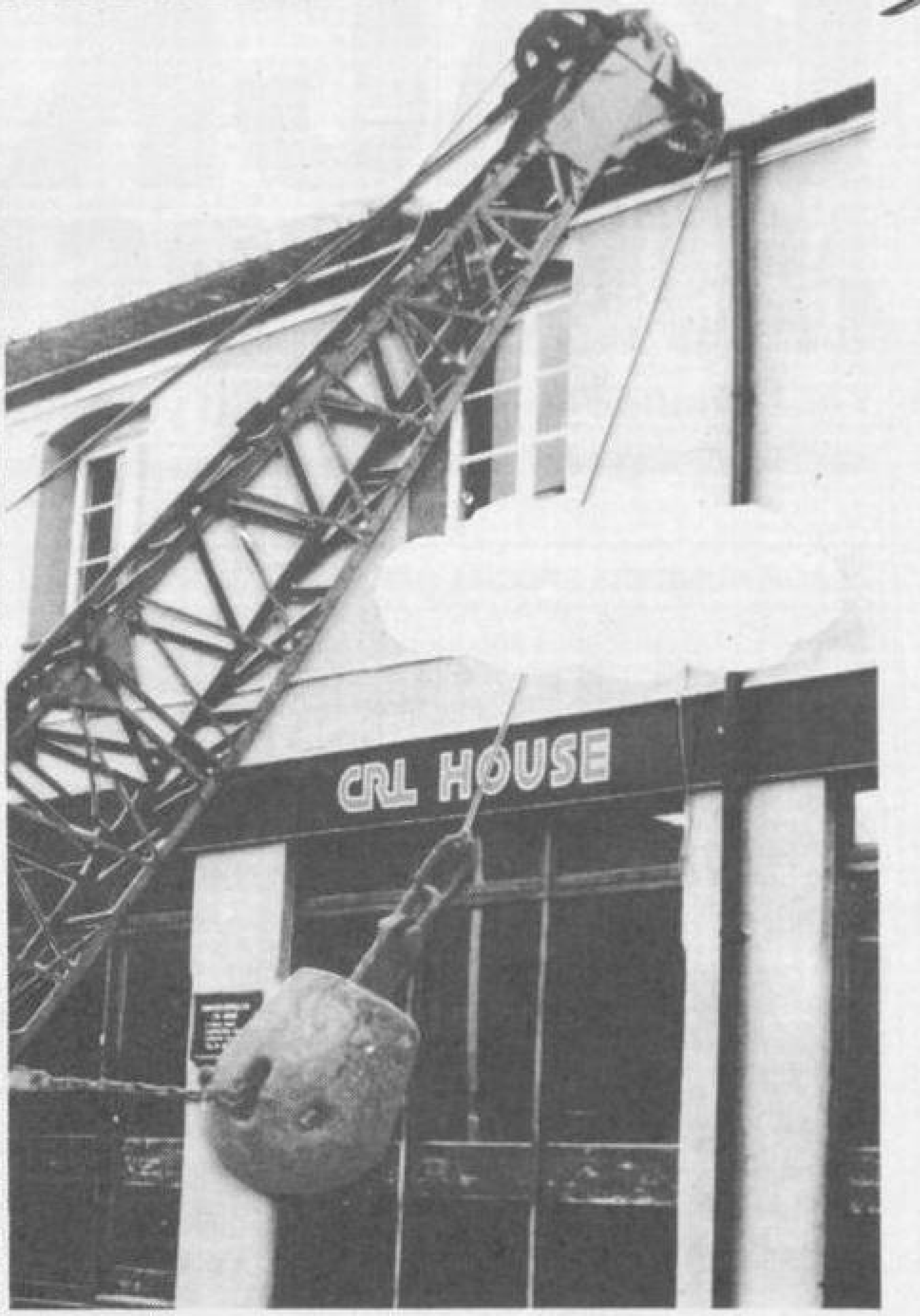
But Stop! It's not a PR stunt at all, it's all been a huge mistake! Somewhere along the line, wires have been crossed and now the demolition crew are set to rearrange the facial outlook of the building – go on smash it to bits! What is to become of them? And yes there's somebody inside desperately trying to halt the proceedings.

Now is your chance to use all that wit and charm you've been saving up for such a moment and save poor **CRL** from disaster by suitably filling in the speech bubble coming from the mystery person within the offices.

The reward for your smarm is something sweet and rather special. The first five suitably witty replies will merit a fabulous mind boggling **Newton's Cradle** plus a copy of the fabulous game, *Ballbreaker*. The next best five replies will earn themselves an ever so lovely magnetic Ballcluster plus a copy of the game. Last, but by no means least, there are 25 copies of *Ballbreaker* for the runners up. So do yourself a favour and make the coffee table proud! Win yourself the ultimate executive toy so it can be heard clonking away in the background whilst playing mega 3D *Ballbreaker*. Just go for it.

Write your witty caption, fill in the form below, and send it to **Ballbreaking Competition, AMTIX! Towers, P O Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1AQ**, to arrive no later than the 5th of February.

Write a witty caption and win an executive toy, or a Ballcluster, or a copy of the game, BALLBREAKER!.



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AMTIX! is THE magazine for the discerning Amstrad owner, combining the best in games reviews and technical know how, coping with adventures and strategy, your problems and ours! You shouldn't miss out on this, but if you haven't been able to get hold of earlier issues of AMTIX! we do have some in stock — and after all, you wouldn't want any holes in your AMTIX! binder when it comes along later this year, would you? So order now!

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No 1 November 1985

*** Complete Guide to games I * Lightpens * Dun Darach Map * Pyjamarama Map * Everyone's a Wally Map * Lords of Midnight Map * CP/M * Tape to Disk Utilities**

No 2 December 1985

*** Complete Guide II * Fighting Fantasy * Alien 8 Map * Word Processing with Tasman * FORTH on the Amstrad**

No 3 January 1986

*** Gargoyle Games Profile * Knight Lore Map * Public Domain CP/M * Computer Art * Extension ROMs * RS232**

No 4 February 1986

*** Dynamite Dan map * The world of Infocom adventures * Amsoft visit * The first batch of results * Gremlin graphics, the journey, the people and the story * Introduction to educational software * Preview of the The Music Processor.**

No 5 March 1986

*** Cauldron map * More competition winners * More educational software * the improved AMX Mouse * the Vortex expansion board.**

No 6 April 1986

*** Maps of Gunfright, Marsport and Three Weeks in Paradise * A review of Pyradev * The world of Lothlorien * A visit to the Ocean and Imagine software company * Readers awards * The Amtix! questionnaire * yet more competition winners.**

No 7 May 1986

*** Battle of the Chess Giants * The world of PSS * A transatlantic interview with Infocom (pt 1) * Reviews of Rainbird's Music System and the Melbourne Draw * Competition winners.**

No 8 June 1986

*** Maps of Shadowfire and Bounder (parts 1 and 2) * The concluding part of the Infocom interviews * Spotlight on Activision * A dissection of Artificial Intelligence * More competition winners.**

No 9 July 1986

*** Maps of Movie and Nomad * How to beef up your Joyce for £20! * A review of Laser Genius * Competition winners galore.**

No 10 August 1986

*** Budget Special * Maps of Heavy on the Magick and Cauldron 11 * A visit to Level 9 * Spoilt for Joyce including a review of Money Maker * Lots more competition winners.**

No 11 September 1986

*** Maps of Fairlight, Saboteur and Movie * The ultimate Joyce supplement including games reviews, a dust cover offer, typing tutorials and a chess comparison * Reviews of Promerge, a Silicon Disk Drive, a Miditrack and a Drumkit * The arrival of Lee Paddon, Richard Eddy, Tony Clarke and Saffron Trevaskis * The NEW look LOGO unveiled * The first brolly induced OTS * The new look reviews * Even more winners**

No 12 October 1986

*** First issue with new logo! * Tir Na Nog offer! * On The Spot with Saffron * Mega Adventures reviewed! * Mirage Imager! * Fanzines Explored! * Mapped Starquake, Jack the Nipper and Tir Na Nog * Short Story * First Challenge * Terminal Man * More winners!!**

No 13 November 1986

*** Saffron revealed! * Accolades for Revolution, Tomahawk, Trivial Pursuits * Saffron's Scoreboard! * Delta 4 Profile * PCW Show * Art Studio and Multiface 2 - Screwdriven! * Ricardo Pinto - Interviewed! * Tony wins a challenge * Mapped Doomdark's Revenge and Equinox * Winners and Fun, fun, fun!**

No 14 December 1986

*** Accolades for The Eidolon, Trailblazer, Scooby Doo, Xeno, Ikari Warriors, The AMTIX! Accolades * The Amstrad Show * Richard loses his challenge * Mapped Dan Dare, Panzadrome * Competitions galore * A Look at the new magazine, LM * Yet more winners**

No 15 January 1987

*** Accolades for Heartland, Zombi, Thanatos The Destroyer, and Bobby Bearing in our Mega Christmas special * Mapped Eidolon, Druid and Glider Rider * Issue 0 of the new magazine, LM * The Newsfield joystick junkies inter title mega fight * Enough competitions to blow your mind!**

Winners + Prizes

Ho hum, here I am again and what a rotten return to work after the Christmas festivities. After over indulging in everything from Aunty Mabel's horrible sherry to Mummy Minion's delicious Crissy Pudding, I find that it's quite a squeeze for me to take up my favourite position in the broom cupboard.

The wheezing hacks at the Towers have all dragged themselves slowly back to their desks too and have announced almost as one voice that their chairs have mysteriously shrunk during the break. Hah! You and I both know, dear readers, that chairs do not shrink and that reviewers stomaches, like their egos, swell up. Mummy Minion has announced a diet plan for them all which has resulted in hurried trips to the toilet. Some have suffered more than others. Malcolm spends so much time on his throne that his low calorie/high fibre meal are having to be slid under the toilet door to him. This calorific regime has met with some disgust from the staffers but their health is at stake and so I will soldier on.

Anyway, I digress. Here is two pages of lucky winners for you to feast your eyes over as you search for your own name. Happy name hunting.

PLAYING WITH PLAYERS COMP

Playing around is always fairly good fun and can only be beaten by free meals. Well, **PLAYERS** were offering just that as first prize in the December issue of AMTIX! Not only will the winner of the competition, **David Weir** of Tarn Rd, GU26 6TP be fed, but also he will be whisked away to deepest Aldermaston in Berkshire to be shown around the Players' offices and pick up every game that they've ever made – along with any other bits of promotional material that they have floating around. Ten runners up each get to pick a Players game along with an ever-so-trendy Players baseball hat.

RUNNERS UP

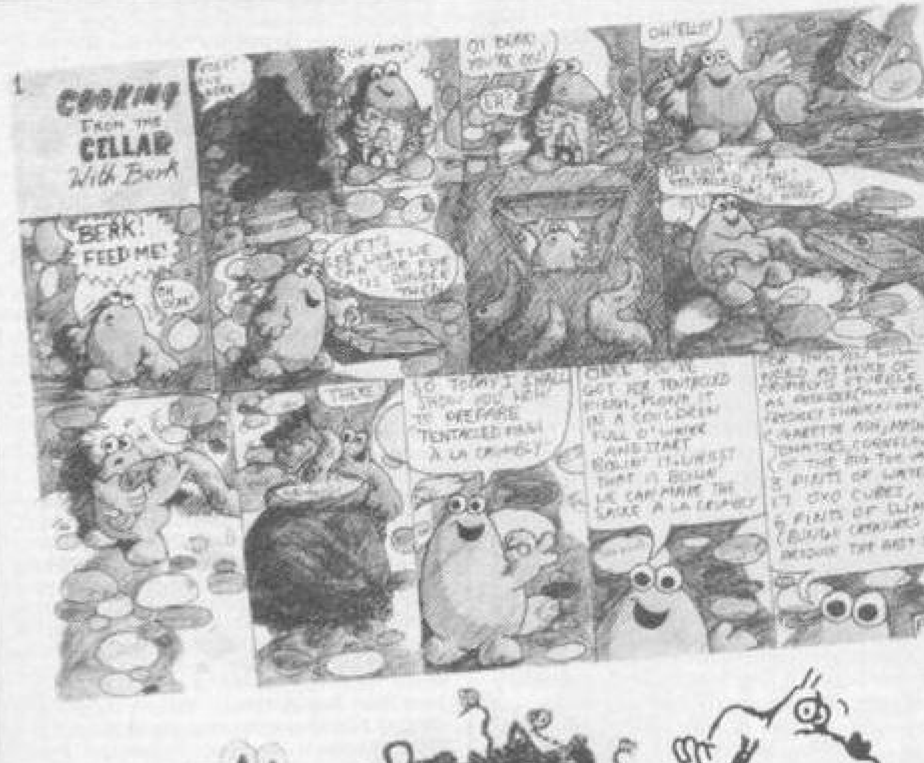
Andrew Webb, Chipperfield Park Road, OX15 4NX; G Brown, Rapsons Road, BN20 9RJ; R J Stowell, Twickenham Road, Middlesex; Philip Richardson, Dundonald Road, KA10 6NR; John Bell, Tresdale Park, TR27 5DX; J Akinlawon, Lovat Close, NW2 7RU; James Walsh, Church Road, PO11 0NX; Ian Perry, Minehead Way, SG1 2HZ; Neal Simms, Shaftesbury Avenue, FY3 8QS; Mark Jones, Fen Road, PE23 4DB

NAUGHTY BUT NICE!

INFOCOM were really rather rude with their *Leather Goddess of Phobos* competition where they asked you to add a caption for each of three photos depicting some gorgeous pouting AMTIX! cuties. (Stop it now - Malcy). **Phil Irish** of Ragleth Gardens SY2 5RB came up with three of the wittiest, if not cleaner captions and will receive five INFOCOM games of his choice for his efforts. Ten runners up will each get a copy of the very riske *Leather Goddesses of Phobos* adventure game complete with Scratch 'n Sniff card.

PRIZE SNIFFERS

Mark Chappell, Woodside East, PE10 0HT; Paul Hopkins, Waundeg, NP2 3SH; Mr R F Keeley, Lavender Place, OX8 3XR; Mads Bruun Olsen, Risskov, Denmark; Mr E Wallace, R.A.F. Coningsby, LN4 4SY; Mr G Doran, Torriden Street, ML5 5LA; Robert Ingram, Cadbury Drive, B35 7EY; J T Starmer, Mayall Drive, B75 5LR; Allan Price, Fernbank Place, LS13 1DF; Paul M Murphy, Whitehall Park, N19 3TW


1
COOKING FROM THE CELLAR With Berk
OI BERK! YOU'RE ON!
OH 'ELLO!
BERK! FEED ME!
THERE
SO TODAY I SHALL SHOW YOU HOW TO PREPARE TENTACLED FISH À LA CRUMBLY
P.T.O

BLAZING AWAY!

GREMLIN GRAPHICS had time on their hands when then offered five designer wallclocks to the lucky people who had their correct entries drawn from the depths of Malcolm's bath chair. The lucky people will also be able to choose two **GREMLIN** games to be lovingly stuffed into a large jiffybag along with their eye catching timepieces.

WALLCLOCK WINNERS

Andrew Williams, Riccarton Drive, EH14 5PN; Simon Anderson, Clapham Common, SW4; R Bond, Priestweston, SY15 6DE; Manes H Parmar, Monega Road, E12 6TS; Peter Rabbage, Newlands, EX7 0DY

RUNNERS UP

R Gasworthy, Beckway Road, SW16 4HA; Karl Davey, Mount Eden, LA11 6B2; David Smithers, Gerard Road, Middlesex; D Bailey, Faraday Road, ST16 3NQ; Mark Foster, Broughton Green Road, NN2 3RD; Steven Trayley, Kingston Road, BN22 2JB; Mark Turner, Astley Abbotts, WV16 4S3; Ben Whittacker-Cook, Penrith Close, SW15 2HQ; J C Lake, Wedmore Close, NN5 6AQ; Theo Springer, Nelson Street, E1 2DL; Guy Genevieve, Egton Avenue, TS7 0GY; Matthew Hadfield, Melville Road, DA14 4LU; A Katsovris, Macclesfield Roa, SK9 2AA; G Doran, Torriden Street, ML5 5LA; Huw Jones, Park Avenue, PA2 6HL; John Lloyd, Southwater, RH13 7EJ; Mr M Lowing, Arlington Drive, SM5 2EX; David Lea, High Street, LL14 6BU; Derek Paterson, Longfield Road, BL3 3SN; P Butler, Cleveland Road, DL9 4JR; Mr G Williams, Crossway, GL17 9XE; J Hattrell, Tattershall Road, LN10 6YN; L Bradford, Mickleton Close, B98 7XX; Glenn Harvey, Clogher Road, BS26 6ST; Richard Wright, Brooke Drive, HU18 1UJ

PIRANHA AND CHIPS

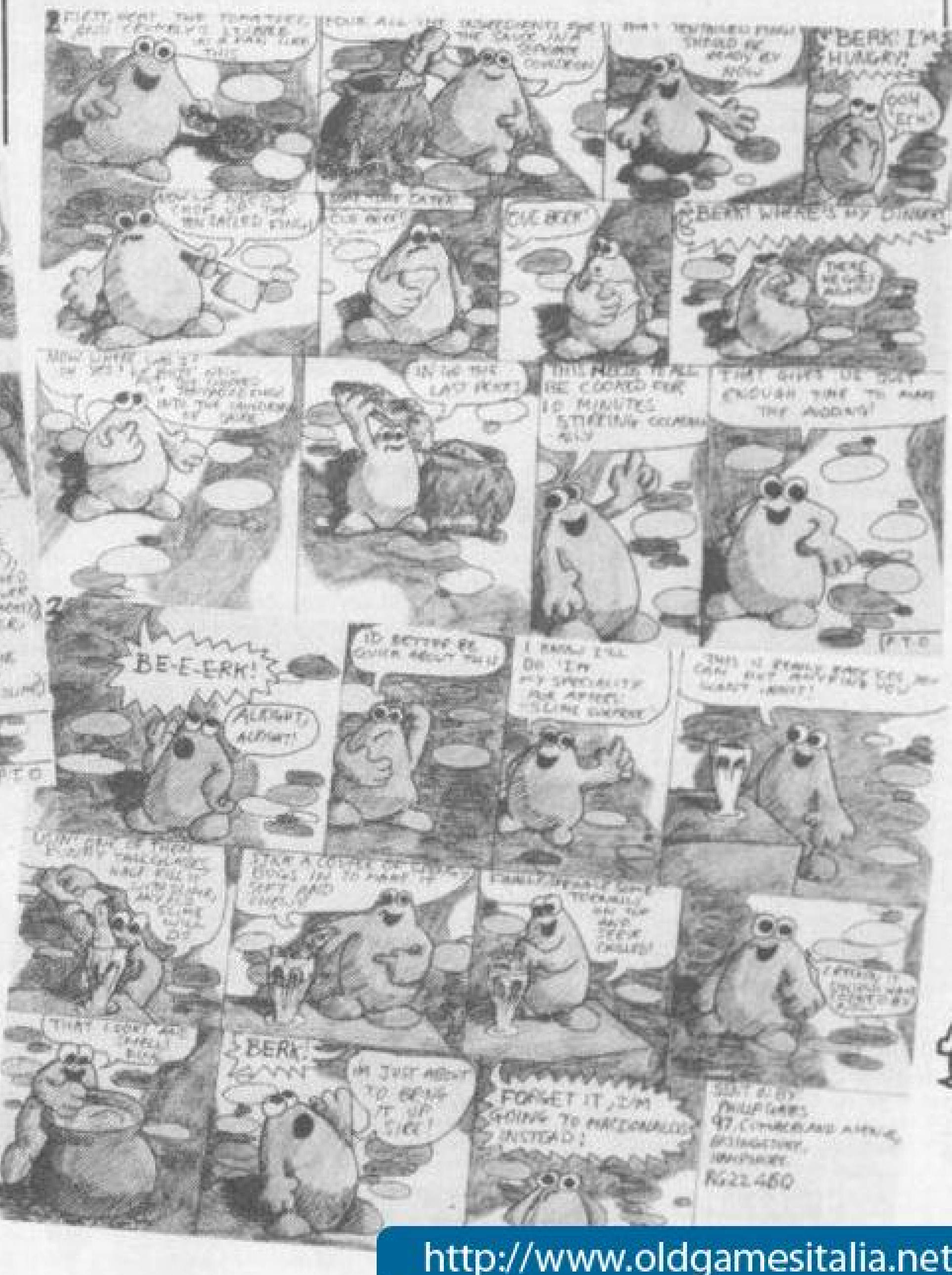
Philip Gates of Cumberland Rd RG22 4BQ is a complete Berk. Or he soon will be as the lucky winner of **PIRANHA**'s competition to come up with a recipe for a slimey meal. He will soon receive a goody ba containing a host of prizes including a large cuddly Berk, book, T shirt, poster and pens with of course a copy of *Trap Door*.

A smaller version of the goody bag will be going to **Graeme Rogan** of Kilburn Close RG3 7DH; **Matthew Hadfield** of Melville Road DA14 4LU and **Sonya Gray** who lives in Blackberry Lane B74 4JF.

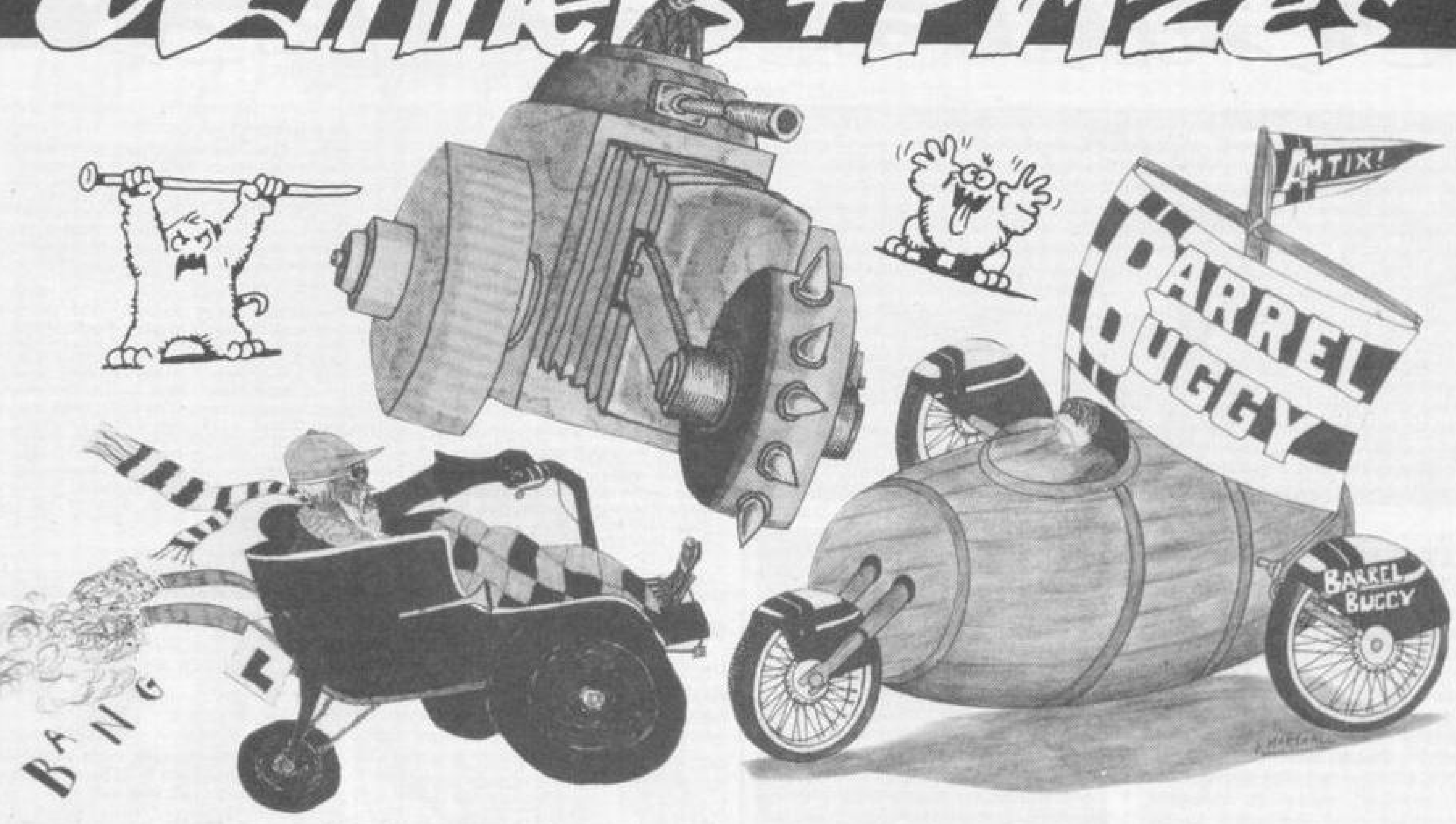
Not everyone can win the top prizes but twenty runners up prizes of a copy of *Trap Door* will mean that not everyone will be disappointed because their meal didn't go down so well with the judges.

SLIMIES

Martin Park, Coldstream, TD12 4AS; Paul Robs, Park Lane, TS1 3LQ; Steve Painter, Queen Mary Avenue, SM4 4JS; Kevin Belbin, Ditchling Drive, TN33 5EX; Richard Lombard, Woodlands Road, E4 7EU; Mark Sinclair, Upper Sound, ZE1 0RQ; Paul Blakemore, Betula Walk, RM13 9TA; Andrew Jenkins, Tan-Y-Bryn, LL65 3ER; Michael Man, Beamcroft, NW8 9HG; Paul Walker, Lorton Road, TS10 4LY; Tim Gurney, Lords Hill, GU5 0TJ; Stephen Spikings, Moorhouses, PE22 7JL; Robbie Hearn, Troutbeck Close, PE4 6JP; Stephen Hooper, Park Crescent, PE19 4ER; Mr D Parkins, Shady Grove Road, CA2 7JY; Nicholas R Thompson, Geleblands Road, M33 5GR; Karen Marshall, Derby Road, DE55 1BG; Darren Newnham, Aspen Close, BR8 7UB; Roland Dockerill, Holwell Road, AL7 3RQ; Stuart Latham, Honister Place, DL5 7DL


2
BERK! I'M HUNGRY!
BERK! WHERE'S MY DINNER
THAT GIVES US JUST ENOUGH TIME TO MAKE THE PUDDING!
P.T.O
BE-E-ERK!
ALRIGHT, ALRIGHT!
I'D BETTER BE QUICK ABOUT THIS
BERK!
I'M JUST ABOUT TO BRING IT UP SIRE!
FORGET IT, I'M GOING TO MACDONALDS INSTEAD!
RG22 4BQ

Winners + Prizes



SPEED OF LIGHT

FTL asked several sneaky questions that had to be answered correctly in order for fifty I to receive a copy of *Lightforce* their great new shoot 'em up. Well, none of you seemed to find the task above you so poor old Uncle Greg will be having to constantly wet his whistle as he sticks down the 50 stamps onto the jiffybags that will be speeding their way to the following winners.

LIGHTFORCE WINNERS

Daniel Webster, Manor Park, MK18 1RB; Mr D L Henson, Silver Street, GL8 8DH; Mark White, Hillview Estate, Eire; Stephen Flinter, Duke Street, Ireland; Simon Duke, Rock Lodge, EiFrate, Maryland Drive, G52 1SW; Sean Rowe, Priory Gardens, BN12 4A1; Tony Vassiliou, Priory Gardens, HA0 2QG; Adam Wheelwright, The Gove, HX3 8JN; Jeremy King, Glenister Road, HP5 2AY; Paul Martin, New Beacon Road, NG31 9JX; Neil Witney, Grand Avenue, KT5 9HY; Phil Doherty, Nappsbury Road, LU4 9AL; Gary Barrett, James Street, ST4 5HD; Ian Colquhoun, Deanfoot Road, EH46 7DX; Iain Robertson, Harrow Road, NG2 7DY; Peter McLoughlin, Alderney Gardens, UB5 5BS; Ian Douglas, Kinnaird Crescent, PL6 6JT; Malcolm Villaverde, Tonstall Road, KT19 9DR; William Leung, Apsley Road, B68 0QU; Mr R Platt, Kinson Grove, BH10 7JL; Alan Bisette, Heath Hurst Road, NW3 2RU; Jon Russell, Wisden Road, SG1 5JJ; David Norton, Inglecad, Ireland; Keith Todd, Stuart Road, L22 4QS; Simon Machell, Hampsted Road, L44 9BL; Metin Algir, Beeston Close, E8 2HG; Lee Russell, Godwin Road, E7 0LF; Charlotte Williams, Calbourne Road, SW12 8LS; Mark Lee, Leopardstown Court, Eire; Neil Dewhurst, Westwood Green, SL6 9DE; Brad Howarth, Montague Road, BS18 3LA; I Bennett, Weldon Road, NE23 6RR; Richard Hewitt, St Michaels Road, ST6 6JT; Paul Whittingham, Broilway, L49 2NH; David Smithers, Gerard Road, HA1 2NE; J C Savory, Wolgrave Close, NN3 4SJ; Grant Tunnadine, Yr Ywys, LL3 0DW; Oliver Eddis, St Michael's Road, SO23 9JE; Christopher Davies, Betws Y Coed, LL24 0BL; Martin Steed, R.A.F. Bruggen, BFPO 25; Dean Giles, Fonthill Road, BS10 5SR; I T Mathie, Shelley Road, LU4 0JA; Frank Curran, Fields Court, SK14 3LH; Gary A Marshall, Derby Road, DE55 1BG; Stuart Wood, Millfield, SG12 0TU; G Royle, Sandiway, M5 3HE; Michael Bird, Oak Road, B70 8HE; R Viswanathan, Cranbourne Road, E15 2PB, , John Bird, West Street, NR21 9LQ

ON YER BIKE!

OCEAN asked you all to find thirteen various bits and bobs hidden in a wordsquare, that you would associate with a motorcycle and there was no shortage of correct answers. The first five names drawn from Malcy's bathchair will each receive their very own designer **OCEAN** bag that have had AMTIX! Editorial drooling from the mouths, as they all fought over them. But fear not! Your faithful Minion has kept them all well hidden so that the lucky five will soon receive their prize. And they are; **Matthew Hadfield** of Melville Road, DA14 4LU; **M Smith** from Plains Lane, CB6 1RJ; **R Madden** of Railway Road, PR6 0HW; **Mathew Rodgers** of Baxter Green, ST16 2ER and lastly **Mr J T Starmer**, of Mayall Drive, B75 5LR.

Well done all of you and to the 25 runners up who all receive a copy of *Street Hawk*.

RUNNERS UP

Robert Greenwood, Maclaren Court, KA10 7BU; Ryan Fox, Five Springs, LU3 3LH; Glenn Veazey, Cliff Park Close, BN9 8TR; Gregory Sowton, Woolacombe Way, UB3 4ET; A McMeechan, Bellevue, BT20 5QW; David J Smith, Rochfords, MK6 5DJ; Christopher Hall, Courthill Street, KA24 5BL; N Hester, Wye Road, HP10 0DU; Jonathon Grawes, Nelson Road, CT5 1DP; Richard Gibson, Kirklands, YO3 5WX; Keith Copping, St Peter's Road, PE14 9EJ; Andrew Gibson, Beaford Close, WN5 8LB; Amtix! Reader, Walker Road, NE6 3JP; J G Coleman, Charles Dart Crescent, EX32 7ED; Ian Good, Cranbourne Park, SO3 4NX; Paul Hawkins, Henley Road, RG4 0DN; D Morris, Grainthorpe, LN11 7HX; N Howell, Eccleston Close, L43 2NF; Gary Barber, Old Park Avenue, CT1 1DN; Stephen Hansen, Carpenters Meadow, RH20 2HQ; L Garrad, North Lane, LN4 4LU; Ian Douglas, Kinnaird Crescent, PL6 6JT; Mrs A Greener, Richard Street, NE24 2HF; Alan Burns, Permarin Road, TR10 8BU; Peter Mintram, Ash-down Hill, SO4 1NB.

CRUMBMOBILE

Crumbly's mode of transport was the subject of **QUICKSILVA**'s competition and you had to design an alternative mode of transport for our very own archaeological find of the century – Malcolm. Well, the designs flooded in and Old Malc was touched (or IS touched) by the number of spendiferous entries that all gave him a back up transport system that could be used if some day the Help The Aged minibus should fail to lug his arcane body the fifty miles to AMTIX! Towers. So, a big thank you very much from the big M himself and well done to everyone who will be receiving a copy of *Glyder Rider*.

WINNERS

John Sholicar, Coronation Road, GL52 3DA; David Stubbings, Culver Way, PO36 8QG; Gilbert Maurides, Heath Hurst Road, NW3 2RU; Gary A Marshall, Derby Road, DE55 1BG; Mr D Parkins, Shady Grove Road, CA2 7JY; D Blackwell, Field Road, GL54 4NQ; Chris Beltrami, Henryson Road, SE4 7HL; Miss Karen Marshall, Derby Road, DE55 1BG; Paul Edwards, Mildmay Road, SG1 5TW; D Taverner, Foxcroft Road, SE18 3DB; David Smith, Farm Lane, TN31 7QY; Nick Leigh, Boode Croft, L28 4EW; Mr T S Hanitzsch, Chockleys Drive, TF1 4TS; Richard Long, Blunts Hall Road, CM8 1ER; Paul McGuinness, Enard House, E3 5HY; Neal Simms, Shaftesbury Avenue, FY3 8QS; Mark Putterill, Melford Close, S75 6EF; Robert Hallett, Hollyfield Close, HP23 5PL; Dave Sheppard, Prinstead Walk, PO14 3AD; Andrew Falconer, Mawfa Avenue, S14 1AP; Richard Minshaw, Belvedere Road, CV5 6PF; Ian Parker, Mill Lane, IP10 0RN; Zak Sherlock, Ambleside Avenue, BN9 7LT; Kojo Ellimah, Doveridge Gardens, N13 5BJ

LEVEL 9 SLOGAN

The AMTIX! staff all plan their year at least a week ahead, except for Malcolm who's only idea of forward planning is deciding how he's going to get out of buying the next round! So, with fifty year planners that are going out for the best **LEVEL 9** slogans, you will all be able to write down the issue dates for AMTIX! and never again be caught out at the newsagents. The slogan we liked best weir of Lily Lane, M91WQ whose slogan was **WHERE ILLUSION BECOMES REALITY** and we'll be hearing from Margaret soon to tell us if she's going to use that on all the company's packaging. More news about that in a later issue. For now here's a list of the winning 50 entries.

WINNERS

Patrick Gould, Oak House Lane, PE22 0PJ; Parbin Sahota, Olivier Street, DE3 8JH; David Hall, Stothard Road, M32 9HA; Amtix! Reader, Drummond Road, B9 5XJ; David Heath, Kensworth Close, Christopher Smith, Giant Tree Hill, WD2 1HA; David Gibbon, Quarry Crescent, DH7 7DR; Terry Schofield, Henley Road, RG4 0DJ; Frank Curran, Fields Court, SK14 3LH; Paula Lewis, King Street, NP3 4SU; T Cottrell, High Street, South Yorkshire; Julian Black, High Street, S45 9DX; John Sholicar, Coronation Road, GL52 3DA; Stephen Crawford, Sandhurst Road, L35 8NF; Michael Turner, Tollesbury, CM9 8RQ; Nicholas Johnson, Storeton Road, L43 5TN; John Smith, Honeysuckle Road, SO2 3BW; Alan Price, Fernbank Place, LS13 1DF; Shawn John, Boundary Road, E17 8NQ; ee Elliott, Carlton Avenue, YO1 3JZ; E Tyl, Hereward Way, PE6 8QB; Christopher Gardner, Homeapple Hill, BS15 5QZ; Robert Hedges, Holywell Lane, ME9 7HP; Stephen Flinter, Duke Street, Ireland; Michael Benny, Ring Road, BN15 0QE; J T Starmer, Mayall Drive, B75 6LR; P D Lavers, Bell Corner, TA4 1QS; Robert Hallett, Hollyfield Close, HP23 5PL; Charles Vald, Lyonsdown Road, EN5 1JL; Samanthrt, SK14 3LH; Daryle Hills, Gwendoline Drive, Leicester; Rhys Jones, Bathurst, PE2 0QH; Gavin Griffiths, Blackbird Road, CF6 9NL; Simon Short, Trinity Link, SB9 0DN; Kelly Green, Blunts Road, SE9 1HX; Darren Green, Blunts Road, SE9 1HX; Franic Green, Blunts Road, SE9 1HX; G J Bostock, Westmurland Road, M31 1HN; Richard Burton, Polventon Parc, TR1RB; S Davidson, Richardson Street, CD2 6AD; Matthew Ellard, Queens Gardens, WV14 6PZ; Michael Thomas, Alfred Street, PO14 3AD; Steve Allibone, Sheridan Road, BN14 8ET; Matthew Hadfield, Melville Road, DA14 4LU; Kevin Patton, Wharfdale, HP2 5TG; Martin Steed, R.A.F Bruggen, B.F.P.O. 25; Jon Hurst, London Road, Windlesham; Rob Shepherd, Trusthorpe Road, LN12 2LT; Steve Painter, Queen Mary Avenue, SM4 4JS

FORTIFY COMPS MINION'S BROOM CUPBOARD!

AMTIX! COMPETITION

Rogue Trooper is one of the best known soldiers in Britain thanks to his popularity in 2000 AD - the zarjaz comic that just about everyone here at Chateau Newsfield fights over every Thursday morning. Well, **Piranha** have now put everyone's favourite genetic infantryman onto the Amstrad where he and his three bio-chip buddies, must search for eight video tapes that will uncover a Souther traitor and result in his buddies being regened.

I must admit they I am usually in the front line when the fight for the single copy of 2000 AD starts, with everyone fighting to get their thrill ration for the week. Richard usually just bobs about until he wades in with arms flying shouting 'Monster want read, monster want read now!' This strange tactic usually results in everyone diving for cover underneath Crumbly's bathchair and Richard gets first read. Mass has the patience of a wart hog, however, and usually stalks his victims and then leaps upon them because it would be silly to do it any other way. He usually tears the comic from Richard's hands and leaps to safety under his desk where he read at his leisure until..Tony Clarke sends in some heavy machine code routines that eventually poke him out of his hiding place. Saffron's not very interested in 2000 AD she much prefers her Horsies and Ponies Weekly but hates to miss out on anything going on so usually joins in with the brawl.

Malcolm usually steps in at some point during all these proceedings to send everyone scuttling back to their wordprocessors, confiscating the offending article at the same time. This is usually followed by Crumbly's tea break where he leaves the office for 40 minutes and locks himself in the executive toilet.

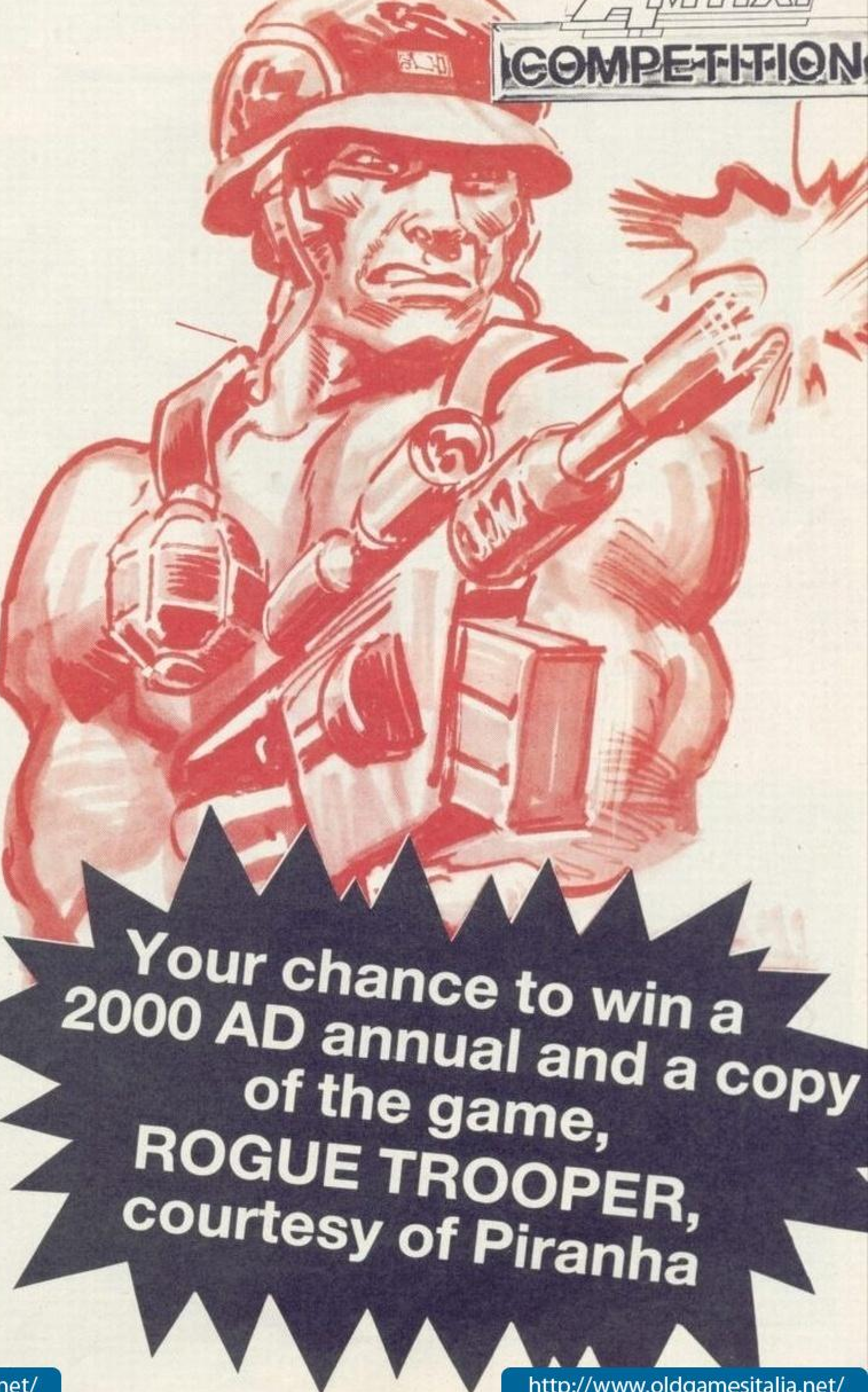
No one ever asks me if I'd like to read the magazine and if I try to read over their shoulders they all send me off with a flea in my ear – especially Malcolm!

Ho hum, life just isn't fair sometimes. Once more I'm going to turn to you again, my only friends, you, the readers – the only ones who make my life worthwhile. (Listen, this is a plea from the heart) Design me a contraption that will enable me to read my 2000 AD in peace. What I'd really like is a design that would fortify my beloved broom cupboard – perhaps with something that would perturb each one of the hideous crew to stop them getting into the closet instead of coming out of it.

WOTSIT WORTH?

Piranha have come up with some fabbo prizes that would please any loyal 2000 AD fan. There are ten first prizes of a copy of the game, *ROGUE TROOPER* and a 2000 AD annual with 20 runners up prizes of a copy of the game each. Scribble your masterpieces down on a bit of paper and send your entries off to:

ROGUE MINION, AMTIX!, PO Box 10, LUDLOW, Shropshire. SY8 1DB. All entries must be in by the 5th of February. May Tharg be with you!



Your chance to win a 2000 AD annual and a copy of the game, ROGUE TROOPER, courtesy of Piranha

SUBSCRIBE

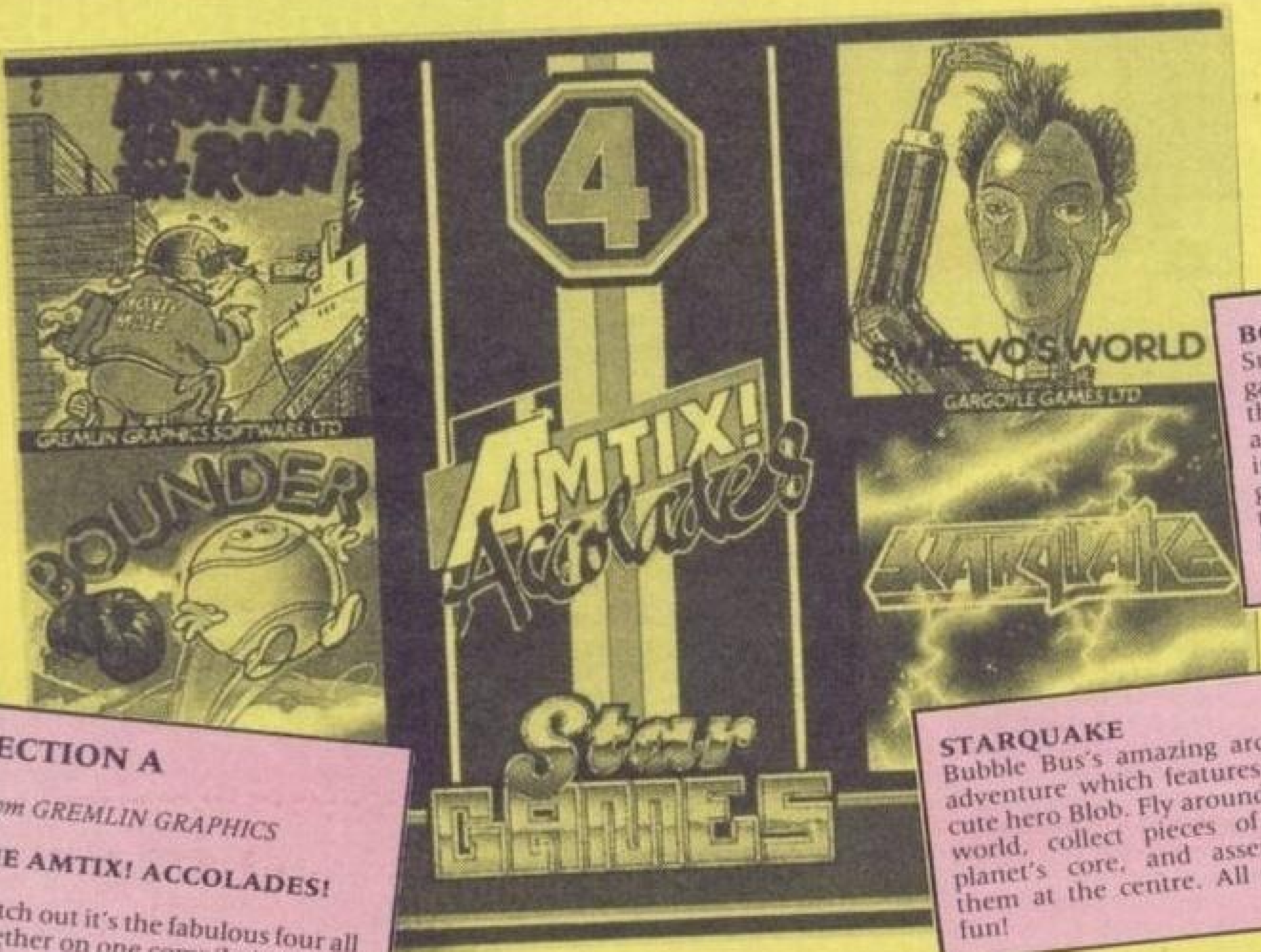
The ultimate New Year gift with a chance of either one, two or four FREE games!

SECTION A

From GREMLIN GRAPHICS

THE AMTIX! ACCOLADES!

Watch out it's the fabulous four all together on one compilation tape.



MONTY ON THE RUN
The return of the famous mole in an all action platform game with some of the most amazing music. Richard called it "A great game" with Glenn saying it was "A game for platform freaks everywhere!"

BOUNDER
Smash hit, all original arcade game. Guide Bounder across the dangerous planes in an attempt to reach the goal. Originally hailed as "An excellent game which is very addictive" this comment was reinforced last month as a "Well jolly game"

STARQUAKE
Bubble Bus's amazing arcade adventure which features the cute hero Blob. Fly around the world, collect pieces of the planet's core, and assemble them at the centre. All great fun!

SWEEVO'S WORLD
From the Gargoyle Games fun label comes one of the most detailed and compulsive Arcade adventures ever. Full of comedy, and very frustrating, it proved popular with nearly every reviewer under the sun.

SECTION B

From OCEAN/IMAGINE

PART ONE:

Choose any one of these brand new games!

HAVE YOU GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A TOP GUN

TOP GUN
Top Gun puts you in the fighter pilot's seat of an American F-14 Tomcat fighter aircraft. Vector graphics allow 1 or 2 players to take part in the action or you can play against the computer. Your armaments in this nerve tingling aerial duel are heat seeking missiles and a 20 mm rapid fire cannon. Fact action great graphics. Dare you enter the danger zone?

YIE AR KUNG FU II
The great follow up to the game that's been riding high in the Top 20 for many, many, many months. Yie Ar II features 8 different opponents. Guide your fighter through many screens of action and adventure until you reach the wizard on level 8. Sounds like a very worthy follow up.

LEGEND OF KAGE
Another new arcade conversion. Pit your wits and battle strength against another group of war torn Ninja's. Starting off in a dense forest kill off all your opponents with your bare hands — if you can find a mystical book cast a spell that will wipe them out. Venturing on you will have make your way up a balcony and into a great house. All manner of nasties are found here — and they all need obliterating!

KONAMI'S GOLF
The masters of the arcades turn their hands to an exciting simulation. Golf features all the regular stuff of a normal play but the inevitable Konami touch. All sounds good stuff.

LEGEND·OF KAGE

Konami's GOLF
Imagine
the name of the game

TO AMTIX!

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If you are an existing UK subscriber then you can still take advantage of this offer by buying any one of the OCEAN/IMAGINE games for just £5.75. Alternatively, you can buy the AMTIX! Accolades package for just £6.95.

PART TWO

Golden Oldies: Choose one of the two groups

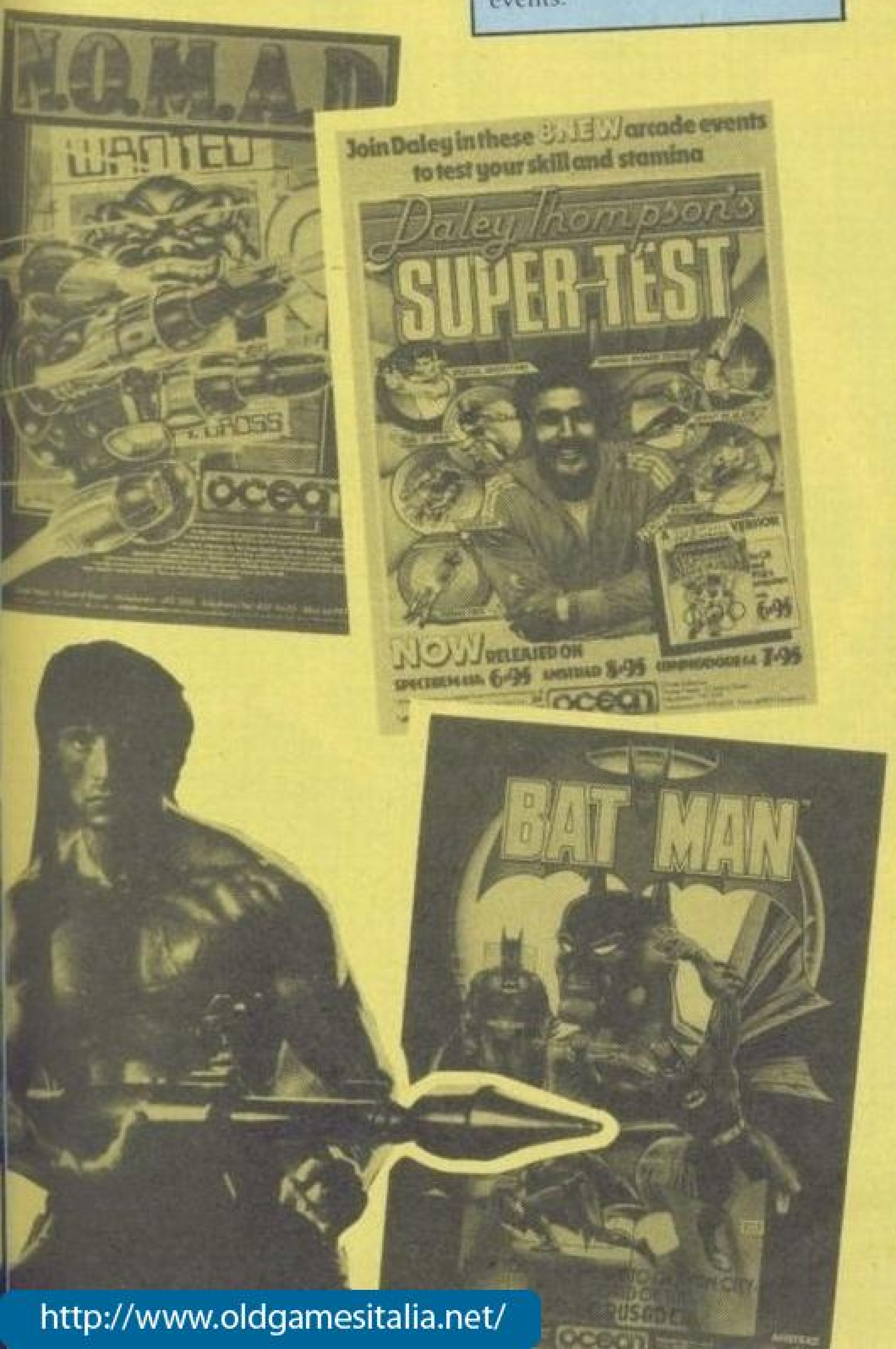
NOMAD AND RAMBO

NOMAD
An accolade way back in the spring. Guide your colourful NOMAD through a hideously endowed maze until you reach the Great Meanie at the end. Eliminate him and the world will be saved! "A real first class product from Ocean".

RAMBO
Take the lead as Stallone in this raid on an enemy camp. Take your pick from the selection of weapons — the more powerful the weapon the more nasty meanies will come after you. Rambo achieved a worthy score of 73% when reviewed in May, and it's still good fun now.

BATMAN AND DALEY THOMPSON'S SUPERTEST
Batman — one of the most significant pieces of Amstrad software to get a coveted AMTIX! Accolade it really was superb. As Batman make your way through the labyrinth of Batcaves collecting various devices to enable you to reassemble the batmobile and rescue your bat-pal Robin.

SUPERTEST
Compete in a total of eight events including, pistol shooting, cycling, diving, slalom, rowing, penalties, ski jump and Tug o' war. Rated at 84% originally it's still a great, if not one of the best, track 'n' field events.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BAT MAN
ocean

Dear Subscription Queen, Denise,
I've been busy ticking boxes to tell you what I'd like you to do for me!

SECTION A

Yes please I'd love a copy of **THE AMTIX! ACCOLADES** free with my subscription . . .

OR

SECTION B

Yes please I'd love the following free with my subscription . . .

PART ONE — TICK ONE ONLY

( ) KONAMIS GOLF
( ) YIE AR KUNG FU II
( ) TOP GUN
( ) LEGEND OF KAGE

OR

PART TWO - TICK ONE ONLY

Yes please I'd love the following free with my subscription . . .

( ) **BATMAN** and **SUPER TEST**
( ) **NOMAD** and **RAMBO**

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I am a new subscriber and enclose a cheque/postal order for £15.00, made payable to NEWSFIELD PUBLICATIONS.
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OR
I am an existing subscriber and would like to take advantage of your offer from GREMLIN GRAPHICS and enclose a cheque/postal order for £6.95 for the AMTIX! Accolades package.

Send your payment to AMTIX! Subscription Offer, Fairview, 47 Gravel Hill, LUDLOW, Shropshire SY8 1QS.

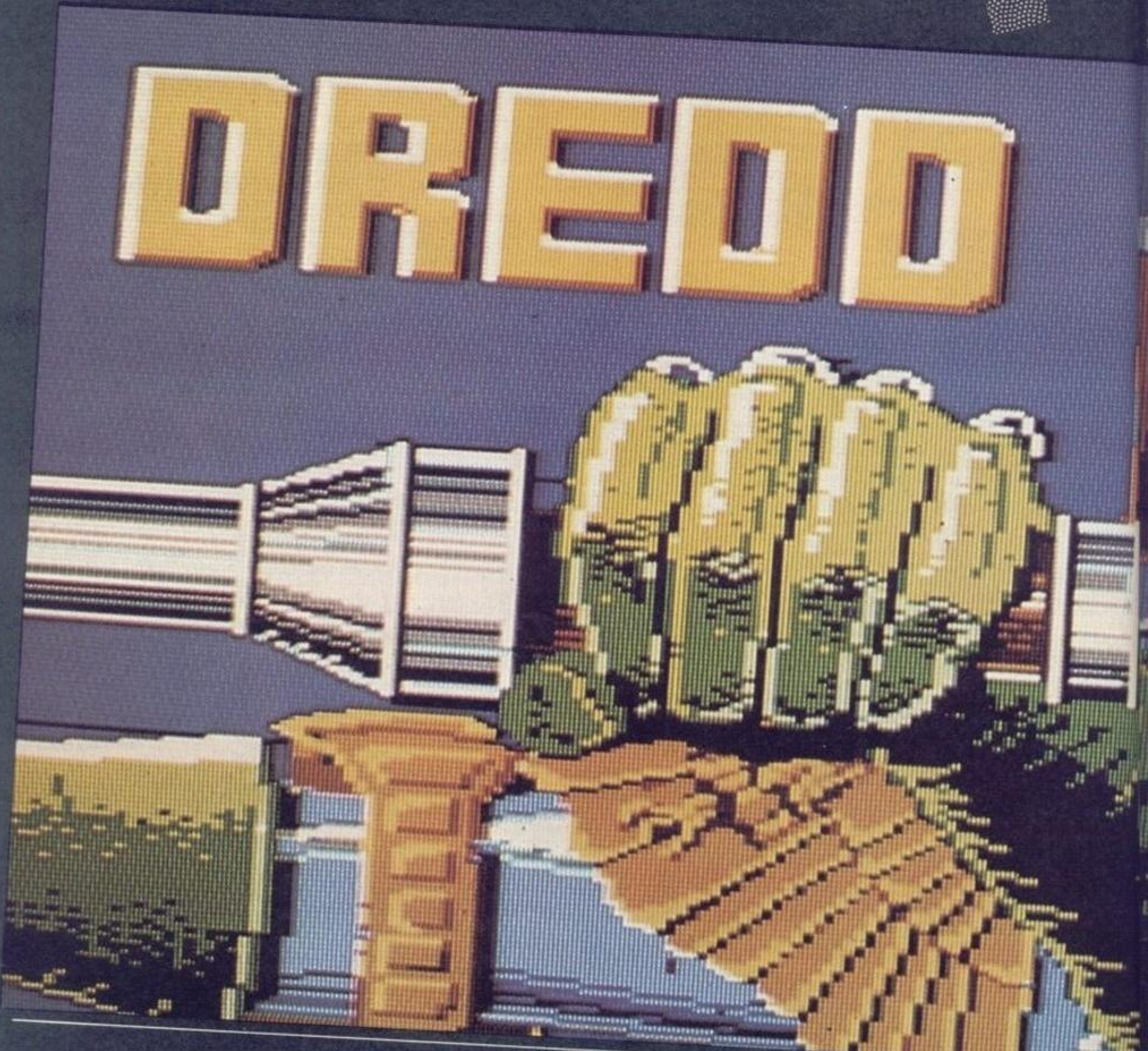
The Rainbird

AMSTRAD
THE OCP ART STUDIO
RAINBIRD

The Rainbird art gallery has been flooded with entries!, well okay, four actual entrants but they sent in more than one entry each , and the quality of work is unbelievable. We wanted to print at least 12 of the pictures but ART said we could only fit in five this issue so we are going to print our personal favourites. Now for the moment you've been waiting for, the winners are:

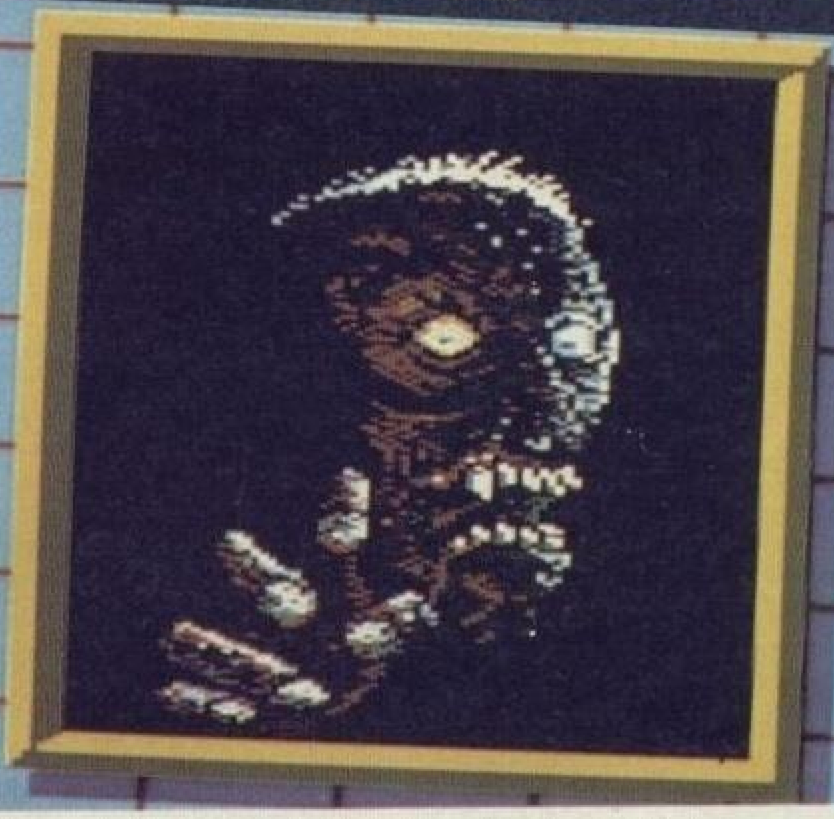
Mark Jones of Poole in Dorset; Steven Tate of Greenleys, Milton Keynes; N Kenward of Leicester's Forest East and Emmet Masterson of Sidcup in Kent, who each win a copy of the Rainbird *OCP Art Studio*.

Good work all round, your prizes will be winging their way to you soon. If you were wondering why some of the pictures are in mode 0 when we asked that pictures should be in mode 1 to 2, it's because the technical difficulties have been overcome and we can now accept mode 0 pictures. Remember that any pictures shown in the gallery from now on will be printed and framed by **Dimension Graphics**, and if that is not enough to make you enter think of the fame, and possible fortune, if you wanted to get into computer graphics like four of our entrants.

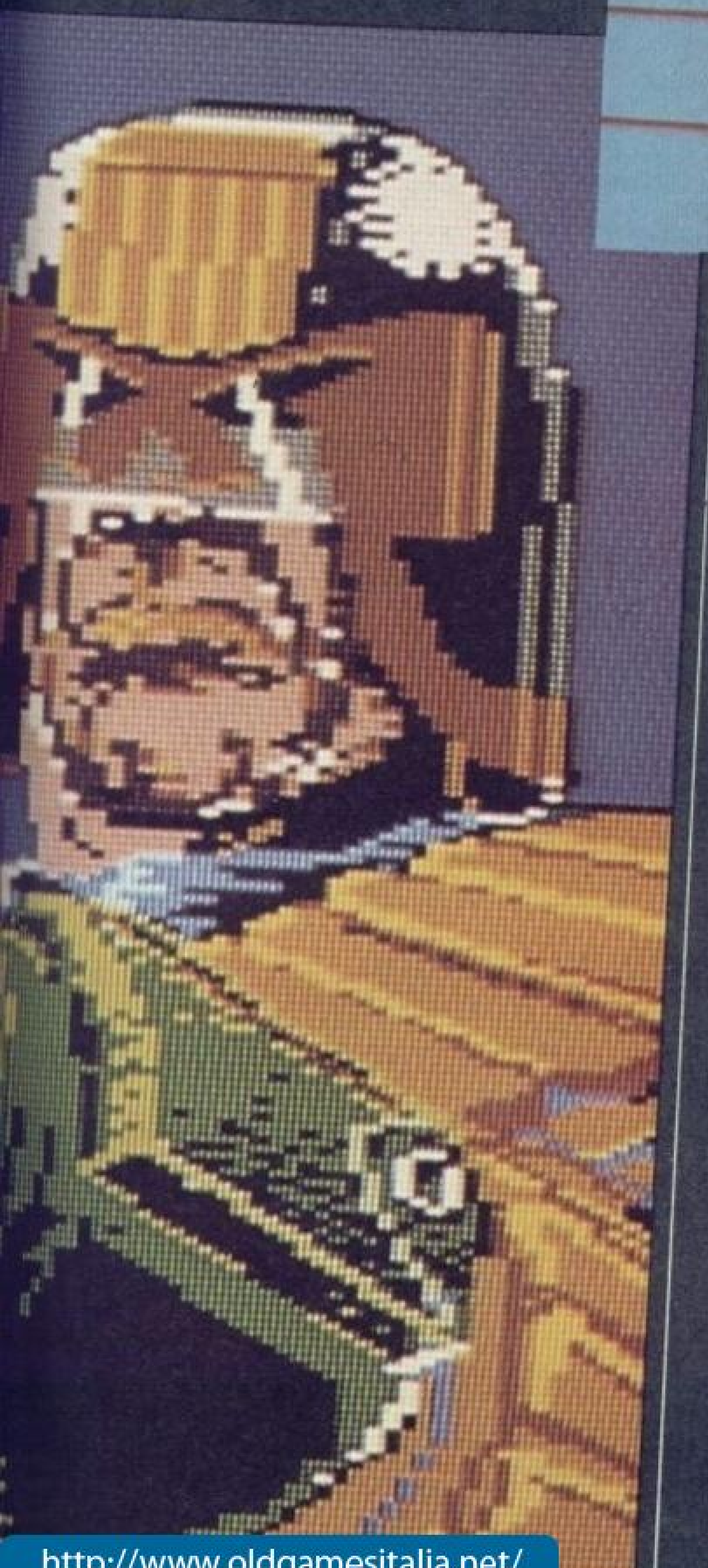


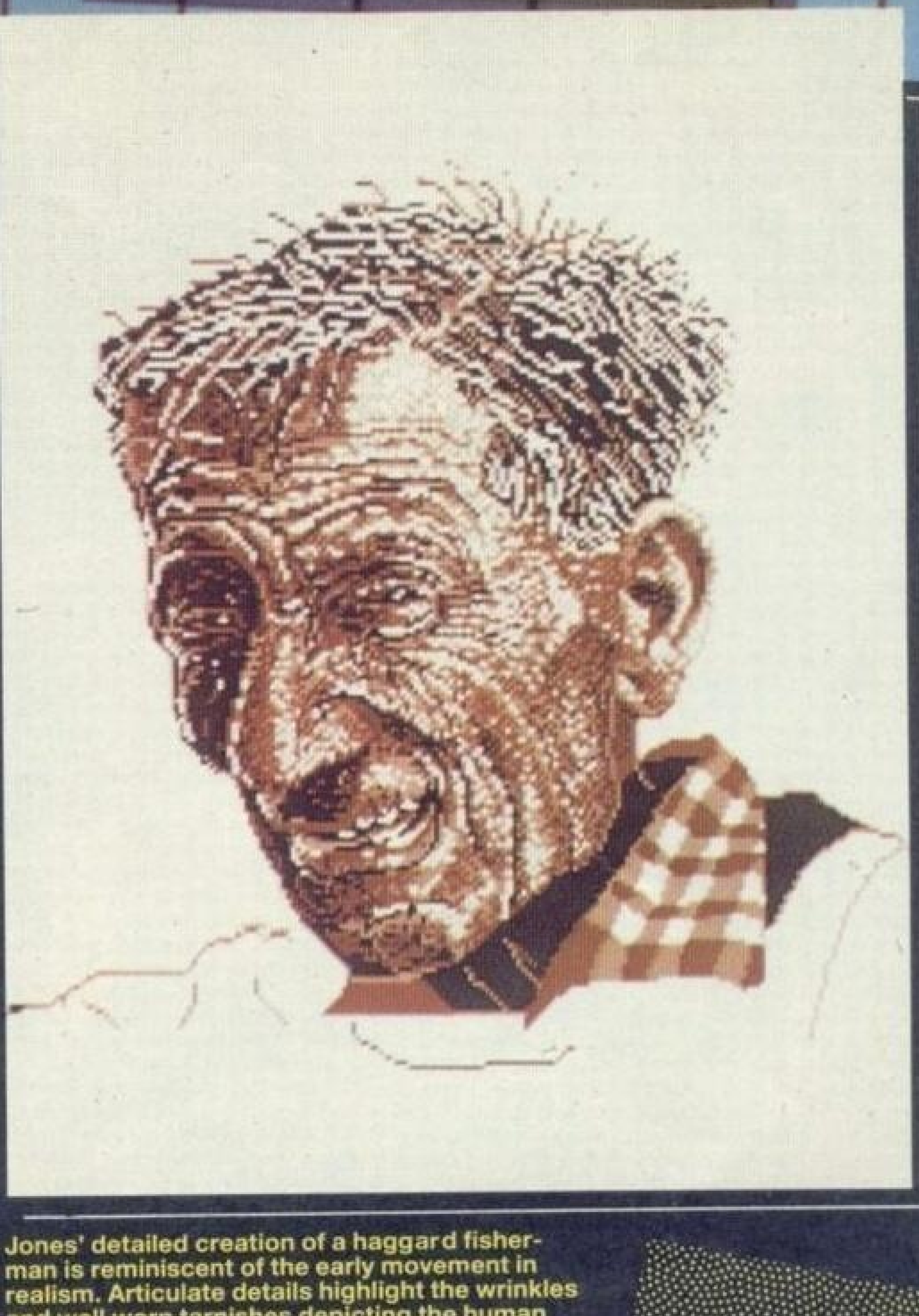
G·A·L·L·E·R·Y

Similar is style to the Gothic Horror period, Tate's Zombi explores the unknown fear we all have of 'Things that go bump in the night'. Emphasis is heavily on the lighting of the painting, bringing the face further into the foreground. It is interesting to note that the same design has been used for a cover of ZZAP! by our own Oliver Frey.



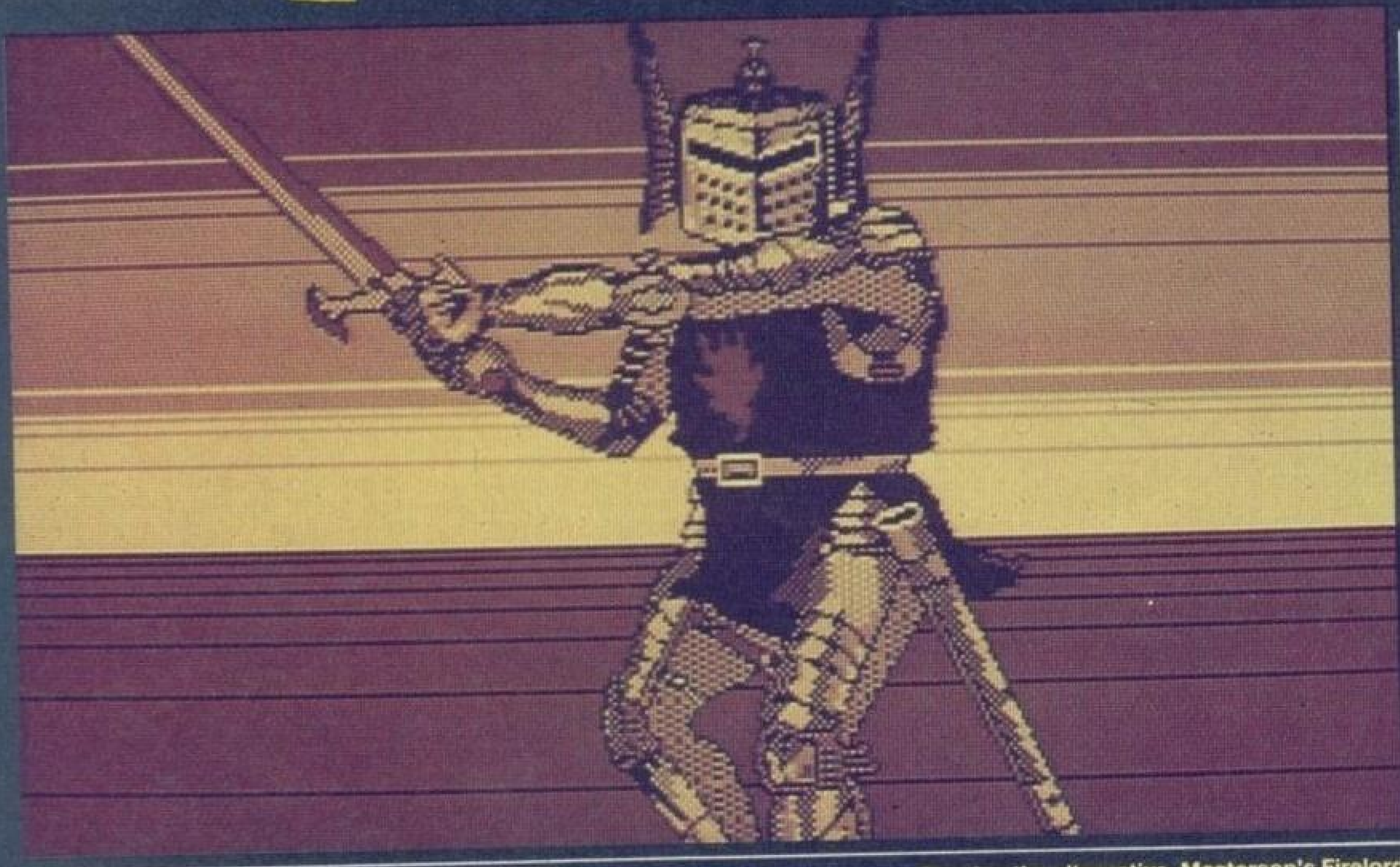
Unlike Jones' earlier work, strong definite contours give the emphasis on this depiction of 2000 AD's Judge Dredd. Cartoon style straight from the 50's Marvel Comics illustrate the flexibility that this artist has.



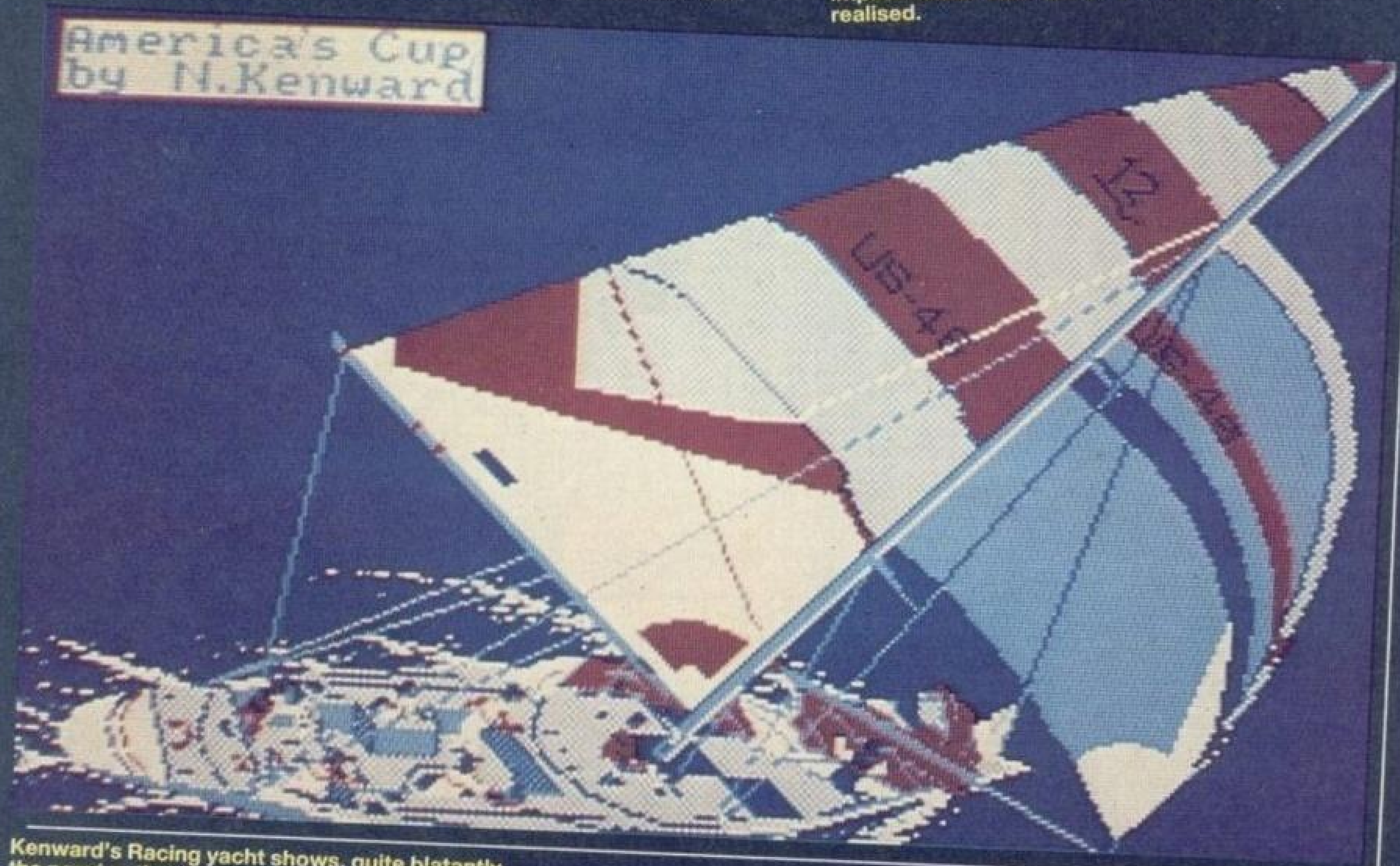


Jones' detailed creation of a haggard fisherman is reminiscent of the early movement in realism. Articulate details highlight the wrinkles and well worn tarnishes depicting the human condition of ageing.

The Rainbird GALLERY



Chasing the alternative. Masterson's Firelord picture inspired by the advertisement. Again note the importance of the elemental image of fire – all powerful, all destroying. The powerful swing of the sword indicates the might that is implicit within each one of us – if only it was realised.



Kenward's Racing yacht shows, quite blatantly, the passion that the artist has for elemental images – such as the sea and the wind whose powerful thrusts force the yacht in motion.

STRIKE

Experience the exhiliration of big league bowling with outstanding graphics and a true perspective action view.
Multiple levels of play, realistic pin action and automatic scoring make 10th Frame a bowling reality the whole family can enjoy. You may even be tempted to invest in high time bowler shoes and shirt once you've become obsessed with this addictive game.
Another smash hit from the creators of that simulation sensation "Leaderboard".

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THERE I WAS DOING MY CHRISTMAS SHOPPING WHEN WHO SHOULD I BUMP INTO BUT . . .

MARK STRACHAN

The man who put Mark into

DOMARK

"MINES BIGGER THAN YOURS, BWAH!"

Our man with the joystick, RICHARD EDDY, just can't resist a quick natter even when he was out and about doing the shopping for the Newsfield Christmas bash. There he was getting in the champers, the gin, the sherry and the Mouton Cadet when who should he meet but that nice man MARK STRACHAN one of the big gorgonzolas from Domark who was doing his weekly shopping.

Hello there Mark, haven't seen you since, ooo, when was it?

Well, blow me, if it isn't Ricky. How are you?

Oh, middling. You know what it's like when you're trying to get a party together. What have you bought?

Ah, I just thought I'd have a bijou indulgette in a couple of magnums of champers to celebrate yet more success with *Trivial Pursuits*.

Yeah, you've gone quite well with that one. How long have you been going now?

Too long! (Snigger)

No! What were you up before you got roped into all this palava?

Well, Dominic and I met while we were working in a small advertising agency, I was working on a few accounts like Carlsberg and Volvo when we thought of looking into getting a computer client. When we looked into the computer market we realised that companies weren't marketing their stuff very well. So, what we decided to do after a lengthy discussion was to leave and set up out own company and try and market or advertise programs well. *Eureka* was our first one – and what was particularly well received by everyone was the £25,000 prize. The most difficult thing of all was thinking of a name; the first idea was Strachan Wheatley Independent Future Technologies. Which, if you took the first letter of each one, spelt SWIFT but we thought that was a bit naff so we decided to take the DO from Dimonic and the MARK and came up with DOMARK.

With that £25,000 prize weren't you worried that if someone won on the first day then nobody else would have an incentive to buy the damned thing?

Two questions to answer here really. One, did we really have the money? And if the prize had been won would the package have sold? We started the company realising that somebody might win it on day one. So we had to raise the money first. We actually got shareholders together and got 24 or 25 individuals to put money into it. The money was already there to start with.

Let's be totally frank and say that the money was in a deposit account which we couldn't touch but we would keep the interest. If someone had won on day one then we wouldn't have gained anything from it.

We had to take the gamble that it wouldn't have been won for some time by making it hard enough to last.

Did the £25,000 promotion pay off?

Yes certainly. We had to make a name for ourselves in a hard and competitive market, and we realised we had succeeded at the PCW show in 1984 when the game was the BIG thing.

Any news of Eureka II with the same sort of money, if not more?

We have plans to do *Eureka II* this year. However, when I say plans I mean just plans and it might get put back to next year. If we do another one the prize will not be less than £25,000 again!

DOMINIC EXAMINES THE LABEL CLOSELY, "AH, VIN DE PLONK, ME THINKS!"

I SUPPOSE THOSE NICE YOUNG LADS IN ART WILL WANT SOMETHING BROUGHT BACK!

"DON ROUGE, WHO'S 'E!"

And then you went for the Bond license didn't you?

Yes, well at the end of *Eureka* we decided we'd go after the Bond license because what makes us tick was doing excellent promotions for our games. Two and half years later we recognise, and I will admit it, that it didn't turn out as we wished it to. And of the three games that was on a *View to a Kill* the third was good, the second one was reasonable and the first one wasn't that hot at all. I'm not going to sit back and say it was brilliant, because I don't believe it was.

What about the other license – the one we don't mention.

(Snigger) *Friday the 13th* was an 'interesting' one and I would like to try it again if possible. Again, I sincerely believe that the idea was a good one. People either loved the idea or hated it. Unfortunately we employed a team of programmers who were not top games programmers and they let us down with the quality of product, and delivery dates. With that I decided to employ a software manager, Richard, and the first product the Richard was involved with was *Split Personalities*.

I mean, Dominic can sit here drinking champagne and looks after the export sales and I play with the advertising . . .

And drinking Champagne?

Um, yes. We are basically ideas people and don't know an awful lot about the technical side of programming – but we did need people who did know and so in came Richard. *Friday the 13th* is something I'd rather forget about I think.

Okay. Going back to *View To A Kill* weren't you a bit daunted by the fact that you didn't have so much a film tie in but more of a character tie in. How did you go about transforming this film star into a computer star?

Well, it was the first computer tie-in that Bond had and so we could say 'At last you can be Bond!' However, despite everything the Bond people were pleased and because of that, and the enthusiasm that we had put behind it, we were quite content.

We now have the rights to do the new Bond film 'Living Daylights' and, having learnt what we have over the past two years, 'Living Daylights' will be good. Because what we now know is that we'll get the game first and then the 'hook' afterwards.

Hummm, weren't you worried that after your previous releases you were becoming known as merely hype merchants?

I don't think it actually worried us. We realised we had more than our fair share of coverage but we have put that right and we know that our reputation was more for the hype and not the product but we knew we'd crack it in the end.

After the tie-in's why did you go for such a diverse product as *Split Personalities*?

Well, we always get a lot of people writing in with games and from Holland came this game. It was exactly the same as *Split Personalities* except for the fact that it used Dinosaurs instead of faces. It was a very fun game but we felt it lacked something so we decided to put people's faces in instead. We wrote to every single person whose faces we included in the game, and nobody said no. In fact all the Royal Family wrote back and were delighted!

It was originally called *Splitting Images* wasn't it?

yes, we did approach the Spitting Image people first but they said they weren't particularly interested in the project so we felt we could go ahead and produce our own game, bearing in mind that the game was all about splitting up the images of pictures and re-arranging them to form a well known face. After all, spitting image is an English phrase. Then one day we got a letter from the Spitting Image television programme threatening to take us to court. We did feel that was a little presumptious but when we took legal advice we were told it was touch and go. So, as we were only a small company who really couldn't afford to lose this game we decided to leave the matter well alone and changed the name to *Split Personalities*. The game was exactly the same, and fortunately didn't suffer because of the name change.

It must have struck you as rather stupid that after Spitting Image taking the micky out of, near as damn it, everything, that they objected to someone having a bit of fun with them.

I have to say, but I shouldn't, that I think a television programme – a satirical television programme, which basically pokes fun at everybody – that when someone tries to poke fun at them they don't have a sense of humour. I think that's wrong really, but such is life.

It went down very well on the Spectrum and Commodore getting a Smash and Sizzler respectively but something went a bit wrong with the Amstrad version. What happened exactly?

▶

No? Do you want me to get the Amstrad programmer?

Yes, okay.

(Mark walks off . . .)

NO! (Snigger)

Yes, as you know the Amstrad has three modes to operate in, and because of the colours required it needed to be done in porky pixel mode 0. So when you looked at Ronnie Reagun on the Amstrad he didn't look half as good as he did on the Spectrum.

Then you hit the big time with *Trivial Pursuits*. Did you actually play the board game at all?

Oh yes, it's funny because Cathy, my wife, can't stand the thing but I love it. But in a funny kind of way I enjoy asking the questions rather than answering them. When it came to producing *Trivial Pursuits* we were faced with the question on how to put *Trivial Pursuits*, probably the most successful board game of all time, onto computer? Many other people had gone after the license but were faced with a block on how to actually do it and I think the reason why we were probably successful in getting the rights is that we had the idea of taking the board game and adding music and graphical questions to it – which couldn't be done on the board game itself.

We also included a score table so that you could see, at a glance, what subjects you were strong at and which you needed some practice on. People like to see how they're doing.

Why did you choose Oxford Digital as they weren't upfront names at the time but, of course, now they are as a result of *Trivial Pursuits?*

With some of the earlier games we were let down by the programmers but with something as important as Trivial Pursuits we just couldn't make a mistake. It had to be right in every respect. ODE were selected mainly on the strength of their adventure *McBETH* which was released at the same time as *Eureka* and while we got the sales they had the awards for their programming techniques. That impressed us a lot. When we had them in, their managing director, David Pringle, was most confident they could do it on time and well – and we believed him. They came up with a superb product across all the formats.

You must have been really impressed with their Uniload system.

Of course, here was a system that meant any tape could be loaded into any computer. It was little short of a miracle!

What further additions are planned for *Trivial Pursuits*?

There's the Baby Boomer edition which is coming out around Easter, that's especially for people who were born in the baby boom after the war, not for the very young. Then there's Genus II which will come out next Christmas and will be almost a totally different game to the TP that you can buy nowadays. The main problem is that we can't just add versions when we want – we have to wit for it to come out on the board first. There's a few more ideas coming but you'll have to wait and see.

Suddenly Streetwise, your new label, appeared. Why a new label?

Well, Domark have never really been known for good quality arcade games. Streetwise is supposed to be more Street Cred, more sort of 'thumbs up'. We'll feature the programmer and the designer on the packaging so that more and more people will feel that their games can be marketed by us. We really want to launch one title a month beginning in March – on all three formats.

Are you looking to Jonathon Eggelton for any more designs? Is there any chance of his other designs such as *Horrornation Street* and *Shell Shock* ever coming about?

Yes, definitely. Jon is absolutely a genius – *Horrornation Street* looks good; he's got some brilliant concepts and that'll be one game that Streetwise will be doing this year. There's so much fun you can have with it. Streetwise is going to become a fun label, something we can play with. Good quality games for games playing sake.

Pleased with Kat Trap?

Immensely, it's been well received by everyone. Reviewers, us, and most important of all, the distributors. We really want to continue the relationship with Jon and Streetwise.

What's in the future for Streetwise then?

Lots. Starting off with *The Sewer* which was the joint winner in the CRASH Genesis competition, that'll be out soon. Then were going to take a look at some other entries and see where we go from there. We're going to have great fun and I'm looking forward in a very optimistic way to 1987.

Good. Look, I can't standing nattering all day, I've got to get back for this party. They'll kill me if the drink isn't there. Oh well, it was nice bumping into you again. You don't fancy a party do you?

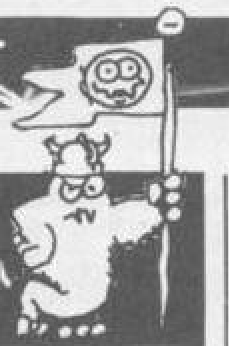
Well, I wouldn't argue . . .

Okay then, run for it the train leaves in ten minutes.

(Scamper, scamper)

SEXY & SWAVE, DOMINIC TAKES TO THE CAMERA!

"AHH, I REMEMBER ~~HER~~, HIM WELL!"



ASTERIX
AND THE MAGIC CAULDRON

Melbourne House, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

The Roman invasion of the known world is in full swing. Gaul has capitulated and a great deal of it is overrun. Most Gaulish peasants quake at the mere sight of an approaching Roman. Most that is, but not the inhabitants of one small village which stands alone, still unconquered by the mighty Roman legions.

This amazing stand against the most powerful fighting force the world has ever known is mainly due to one mystical druid, known as Getafix. His powers and wisdom have created a shield of magic that surrounds the village and its inhabitants, protecting them from the onslaught. Being a clever sort of chappie, Getafix has also taken the precaution of creating a magic potion that gives the peasants infinite strength – just in case the shield fails for some reason. All of the villagers are entitled to a fair dose of the potion every day, apart from the great fat lummox, Obelix – when he was a baby the careless trollop fell into the cauldron in which the potion is mixed, and its effects on him became permanent.

The poor chap is getting a bit fed up with not being allowed any more magic potion and eventually gets so irate that he kicks the cauldron with all his might. Not a wise move: the cauldron smashes into eight small pieces. Such is his power that the bits go flying all over Gaul, and some even reach the far corners of Roma! Getafix isn't too happy about his beautiful cauldron being smashed up, and orders the clumsy one to go and retrieve the pieces. Obelix, being Asterix's bestest ever friend, manages to get Asterix roped into the adventure. This is where it all begins . . .

With you controlling Asterix, the arcade adventure proper begins in the ancient Gaulish village. On entering a location the screen fills with trees and various types of dwelling, each is drawn individually so you get some idea of the build up of the scene. Once the screen is complete, the action continues and you can walk in any of the four standard directions around the screen. However, Asterix isn't allowed to simply explore his habitat – there's plenty of gratuitous violence lurking around every corner. This comes in many forms, but whatever you may come across, the battle sequence always takes place in a sub-window.

One of the first battles that you engage in is against the wild boars. It is essential to kill these as they are your only supply of food throughout the adventure (and our indominatible Gauls have very hearty appetites). Other foes include Centurions in Roma who take some serious beating; failing to overcome them results in a loss of one of your lives. Each time you locate an object – be it a piece of the cauldron, an apple or a key – a window opens, similar to the combat window, which informs you of your find.

At the top of the screen are icons which keep tally of Asterix's progress. They show the amount of 'hams' (boars killed), the number of cauldron parts collected, an icon to show whether the potion is present or not, an icon to indicate if a key is being carried, and a small picture of Asterix to show how many lives are remaining. Also included with the status is the present screen's title and the score – various points are awarded for different actions carried out. Okay then Matey chops wander off now, and don't come back until you've found every last piece. Ho hum . . .

Richard

CRITICISM

The first thing to strike you about ASTERIX is the bold stylised graphics – they work very well. That is until everything starts to move. Juddery movements do not entice me into progressing very deeply into the game. However, with a bit of persistence – and taking no notice of the time each screen takes to draw, and not minding that in the combat sequences the main characters flicker like mad, and the virtual absence of sound and the fact that you get killed off quite quickly – it's really quite an enjoyable game. It can be fun for some time and, although I wouldn't have the slightest intention of lashing out the full ten quid on it, I did enjoy playing it. But only for a while.

anthony

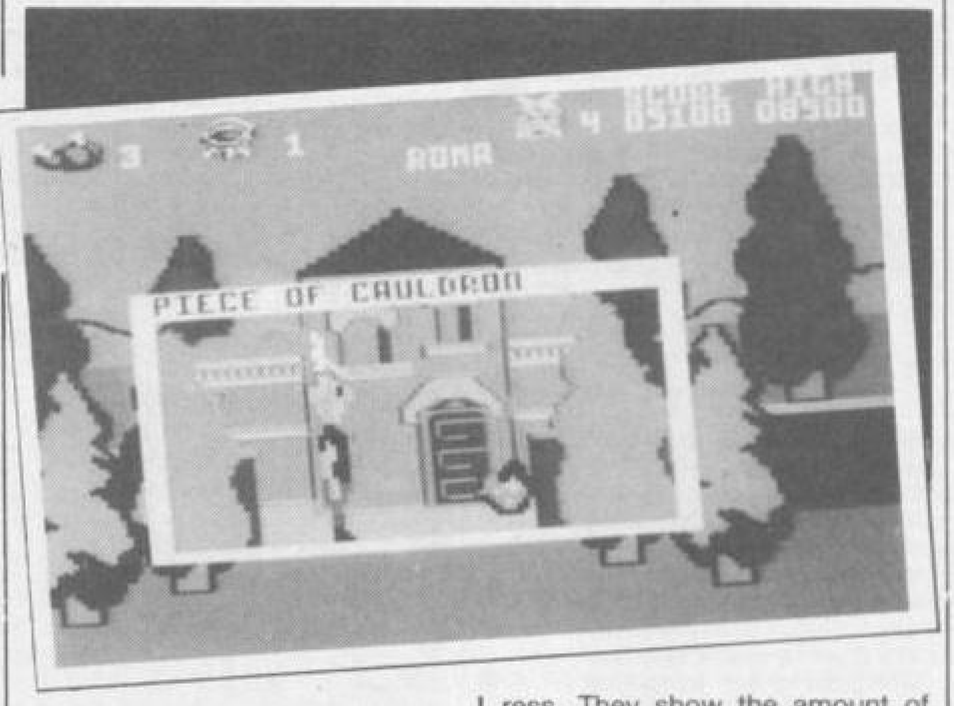
CRITICISM

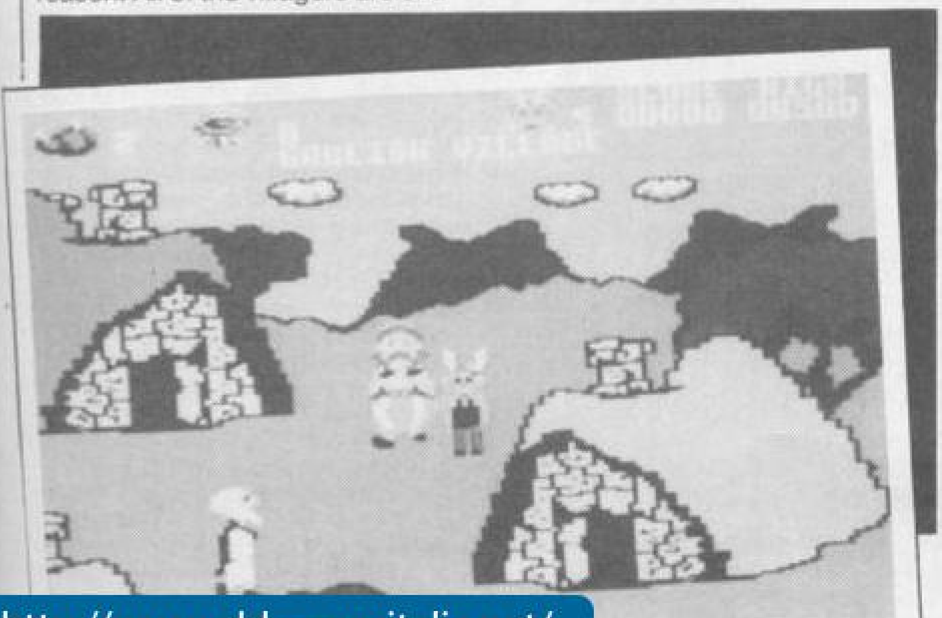
A great idea, but it's a shame about the game. The first thing that strikes you about ASTERIX is the speed at which the backgrounds are drawn, it's abyssmally slow, as are the characters when they move about the screen (you can see them being drawn). The next bad point is that there is no sound, not even the Asterix theme from the cartoons. Melbourne House seem to be resting on the reputation of their best selling adventures (which are also quite bland and have very little puzzling). Let's hope Melbourne get their act together again soon!

Mass

CRITICISM

There wasn't anything in the slightest to keep me interested in ASTERIX. The characters may be nice and large but they move around in eppy mode and the fight sequences are just as bad – it looks like they're shaking hands violently. The sound effects are minimal and there is no theme tune at all. Well Dicky and Tony have said just about everything there is to say so, in order not to be repetitive, and given the fact that I felt no enjoyment in playing ASTERIX, I shall leave it at that. Damn shame, I like the cartoons!





PRESENTATION 68%
Good use of icons to keep tally of score.

GRAPHICS 65%
Bold and stylised but take too long to appear on the screen.

SOUND 20%
Nothing special at all.

PLAYABILITY 70%
To be fair, quite good.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 61%
Initially good, but the profusion of faults soon render it sub-standard.

VALUE FOR MONEY 50%
More suited to a £7.95 game.

OVERALL 60%
Not horrendous but the price lets it down.

HIGHLANDER

Ocean, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

It was a normal boring Monday morning. There you were having breakfast thinking about work and wandering if you'll miss the number nine bus when suddenly 'WHAMMO!' The next thing you know is that you're dressed in funny looking cloths clutching a sword in your hand. You look up and what do you know – there's a mean looking bugger trying to knock your block off. The only thing left to do is fight for your life.

Highlander is a three stage game with each stage having to be loaded separately. In the first stage you face your first opponent – Ramirez. Being the easiest to defeat here you must develop your skills in attack and defence, with timing and position being all important. Against Ramirez you must perfect your sword play as further opponents require more than just brute strength. At your disposal you have a variety of fourteen moves – eight while standing and six while kneeling. Positioning is done simply by moving left and right and kneeling is done by pulling down on the joystick.

While standing you have two defensive moves (Defend head, Defend body) and six attacking moves ranging from 'cut down', 'thrust at neck' to 'thrust at feet'. Each of these moves is accessed by keeping the fire button pressed and moving the joystick in the appropriate direction. Once kneeling you have three defensive (defend neck, defend head and defend feet) and three attacking moves (cut body, thrust body and thrust legs) and again accessed by keeping the fire button pressed.

Mass

CRITICISM

HIGHLANDER is one of those games that I just couldn't get into. The game is well presented in that it gives you very good instructions, with various moves even being illustrated, but unfortunately it lacks the playability to suit. The graphics, although being colourful, are rather jerky in places and the characters doing battle seem to be injured before they start – they walk with a limp. The movements are slow to implement and I found that if too many moves are tried in quick succession not a lot happens. Overall it's just another combat game and one that I'm sorry to say I wouldn't readily return to.

Richard

CRITICISM

HIGHLANDER, for me, has the same appeal as being hit in the face by a rotten tomato – you just don't get any satisfaction from it. The battling appears futile – the characters are slow to respond to the joystick movements and not always that useful. On the good side the presentation of the game is superb, from the uncluttered instructions to how it actually looks on screen. Unfortunately the quality isn't consistent into the gameplay itself. HIGHLANDER has very little in it that appealed to me. It all seemed a bit like one of the worse events from KNIGHT GAMES.

At the base of the screen you have two horizontal bar charts indicating the energy levels of the two doing battle. The energy is the key to the game – when you run out your head falls off and, obviously, you're dead. Energy is expended when you receive a blow or when you are unsuccessful in attack. It is recharged at a constant rate but recovery is slower than depletion so when it is low it is best to back off until you strength returns.

Once you feel you have gained the sufficient skills you can then load the second stage and face a more taxing opponent – Fizir – an ancient and skilfull fighter in modern day New York surroundings. And then comes the third stage, high on the roof tops above the city, when you face the mighty Kurgen. . . . .

PRESENTATION 61%
Basically good but nothing exciting.

GRAPHICS 72%
Big, colourful characters that work well.

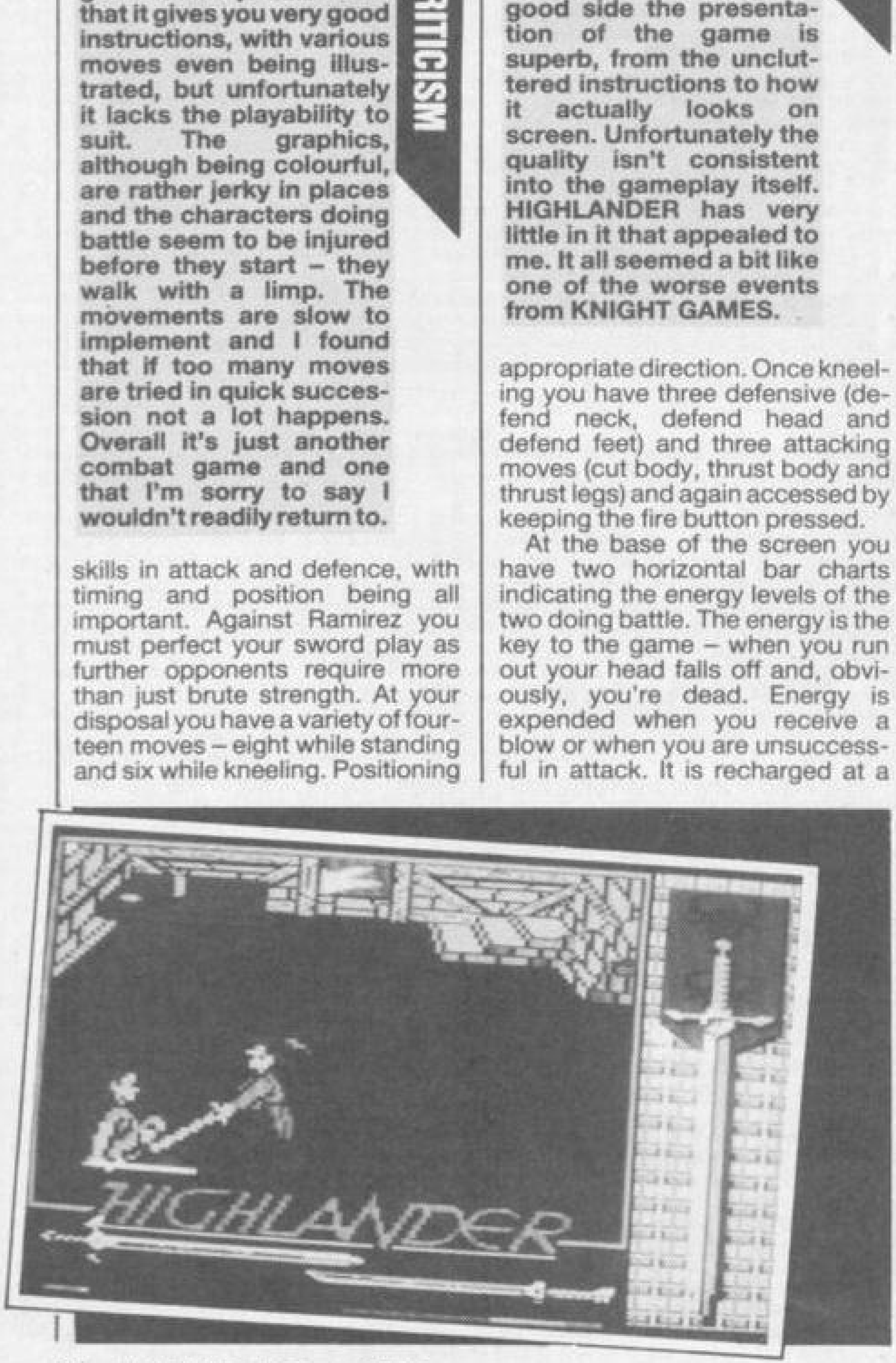
SOUND 75%
Reasonable rendition of 'It's a kind of Magic'

PLAYABILITY 56%
Unresponsive controls lead to tedious gameplay . . .

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 48%
which obviously means that it won't be dug out too often!

VALUE FOR MONEY 48%
Poor really when you consider the content.

OVERALL 55%
Pretty graphics but not much else.



STREET MACHINE

Software Invasion, £8.95 cass, £14.95 disk, joystick or keys

You really can't resist it. It has to be done. As the proud owner of a sleek fast car it's the only chance you'll get to prove that you are in total control of the ultimate Street Machine.

In the driving seat of a high powered, turbo charged automobile the course you must tackle winds through suburban areas, over rivers and past lakes. The car handling depends on the road conditions, thus if you take a bend too fast it may induce a skid. In the first level the race takes play in daytime with fine weather and dry roads. Once you have completed that you move onto the second stage, set along the same route, except this time it takes place at night. The weather has worsened, the screen flashes in a thunder storm and rain makes the roads very slippery. The third and final stage, yet again is set along the same course. but now it's daytime once more. The roads have become even more treacherous as snow has fallen making the whole thing a very slippery affair indeed.

The course is lined with many a barrier, houses, hedges and the like, and a high speed collision will simply explode the car and it's the end of the game, but a low speed crash will add to the general wear

Mass

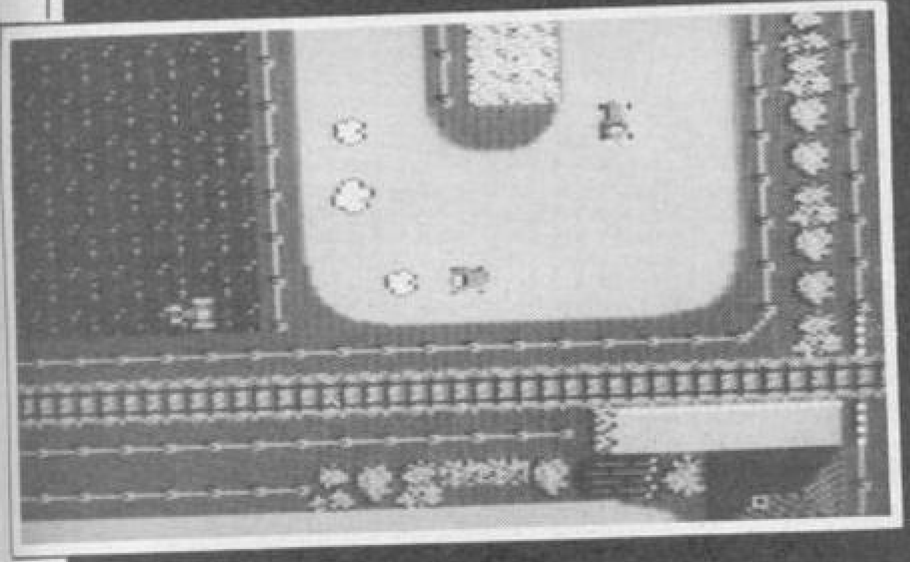
CRITICISM

The way the car jerks around you would think it was damaged before it crashes. The scenery is the best part of this – detailed and colourful. I soon found I got very bored with zooming round the same old track all the time. The sound effects just about serve the purpose and on the second level the thunder flashes are more annoying than atmospheric. The damage chart is totally green type and the percentage numbers are small with components on 100% damage easily missed. All in all just another race game – YAWN!

Richard

CRITICISM

I don't think I've ever seen a car, or the surrounding scenery, going through an epileptic fit – but, believe me I have now. The area jerks around so much that it's really offputting to play. For a while I got quite involved in STREET MACHINE, zooming around the place and fixing my car but it doesn't take long for it to get really repetitive and boring. A silly little game that might have been fun but has come out a horrid disappointment.



and tear of the car. When damage reaches advanced levels the car will begin to backfire and splutter smoke everywhere. Eventually the damage will become so excessive that the car will break down giving you a chance to carry out repairs.

The maintenance chart will appear when the car breaks down and at the end of every level. The chart is a full screen list of the components of the car with a percentage rating of damage sustained, for example Sump 98%, windscreen 49% and so on. You must move the cursor along the damaged parts in turn pausing long enough to make as full a repair as you feel necessary. Any vital part remaining with more than 79% damage at the 'Time Out' message will end the game.

PRESENTATION 62%
Not a lot to explain really.

GRAPHICS 58%
Nice scenery – that's it.

SOUND 50%
Best played with sound off on second level.

PLAYABILITY 75%
Just rip around as fast as you dare.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 55%
Very limited.

VALUE FOR MONEY 56%
I'm sure there are more exciting things to spend your money on.

OVERALL 60%
Old idea – simple game.

ELEVATOR ACTION

Quicksilva, £8.95 cass, joystick or keys

Who are *they*? What do *they* want? All that is known is that *they* keep their evil secret plans behind locked doors. Red Doors. Suspicious.

Secret agent Otto has been given the job of penetrating *their* HQ late at night. You take the role of Otto in Quicksilva's arcade conversion of this classic game. The building consists of thirty floors all interlinked by elevators and staircases. All the floors are prowling with guards who are determined not to allow the plans leave the building.

Having collected all the papers from behind the red doors, he can make his escape in the car that is conveniently waiting at the base of the building. Leaving the building without the papers won't work, if you try to then it's back to the middle of the building to collect all the missing information.

The elevators can only be operated when Otto is standing inside them; by pressing up or down on the joystick he will travel in the desired direction. To enter the Red doors Otto must be standing on the red mat beside the door and with a quick flick of the joystick in a downward direction you'll be able to retrieve some papers worth 500 points to your total.

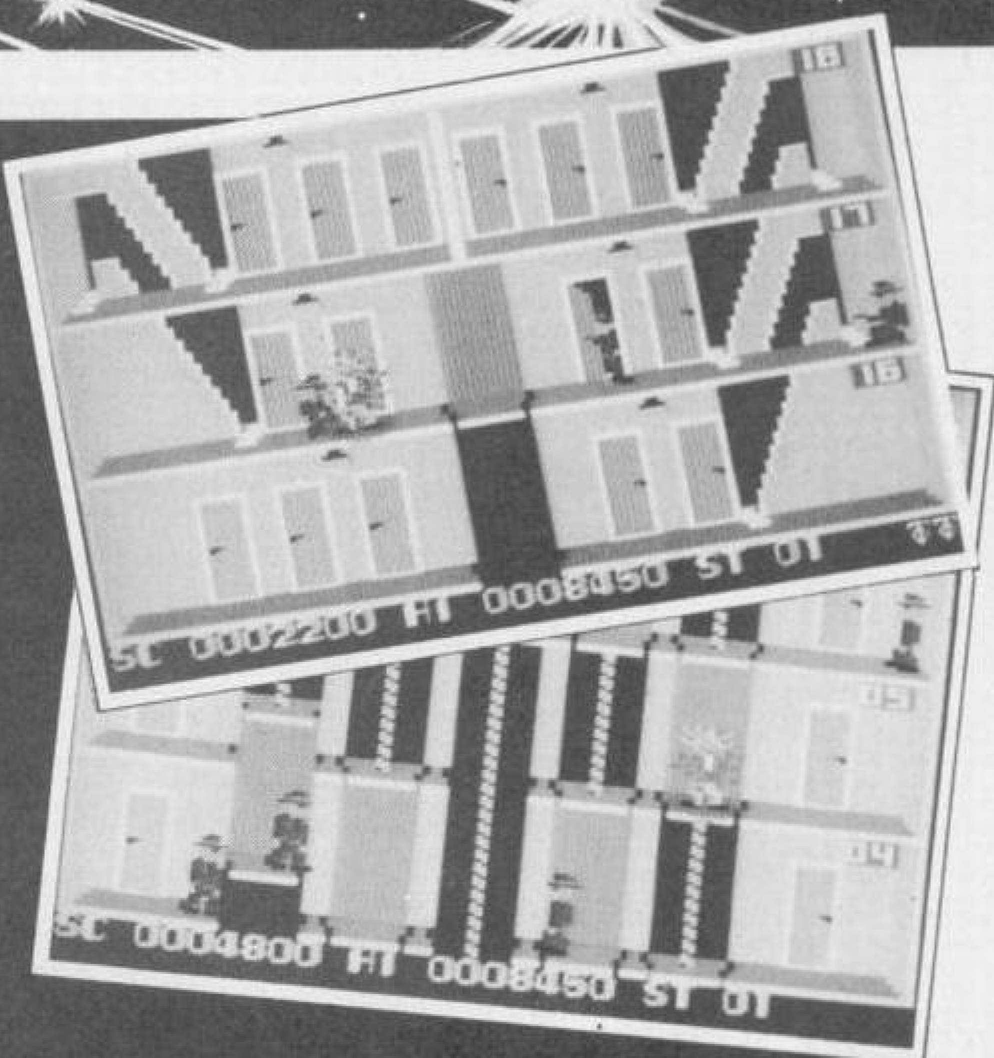
To kill off the opposition Otto is equipped with the latest in secret agent's gun. He can also kill *them* off with his flying kick which quickly sends them into a crumpled heap on the floor. If you don't feel like killing *them* outright shooting the lights temporarily confuses *them* which should give you time enough to descend a few more floors.

With each successive round more guards appear making life that little bit more difficult for your good self, so best of luck!

Anthony

CRITICISM

Not a patch on MISSION ELEVATOR. I quickly tired of ELEVATOR ACTION, the tune is the only good bit of the game. Another problem is that there is very little leeway when a bullet comes flying at you. The graphics are also very poor and tend to be very jerky. Let's hope for another good game from Quicksilva like XENO soon.



Richard

CRITICISM

This is one arcade game that hasn't seen a lot of variants. In fact MISSION ELEVATOR is the only one which springs to mind. However, it is fun for a while but I don't think it will last very long, not with me anyway. The music is the only really outstanding thing – loud bouncy and jolly. Good Stuff. Unfortunately the actual playing controls of ELEVATOR ACTION are a bit unresponsive – especially when taking the stairs. I didn't think that much of it, I doubt if you will either.

PRESENTATION 60%
Nice opening screen, pity there's no music there.

GRAPHICS 68%
A bit blocky, reasonable though.

SOUND 87%
Great thumping tune blasts away in game.

PLAYABILITY 66%
Slightly unresponsive to commands.

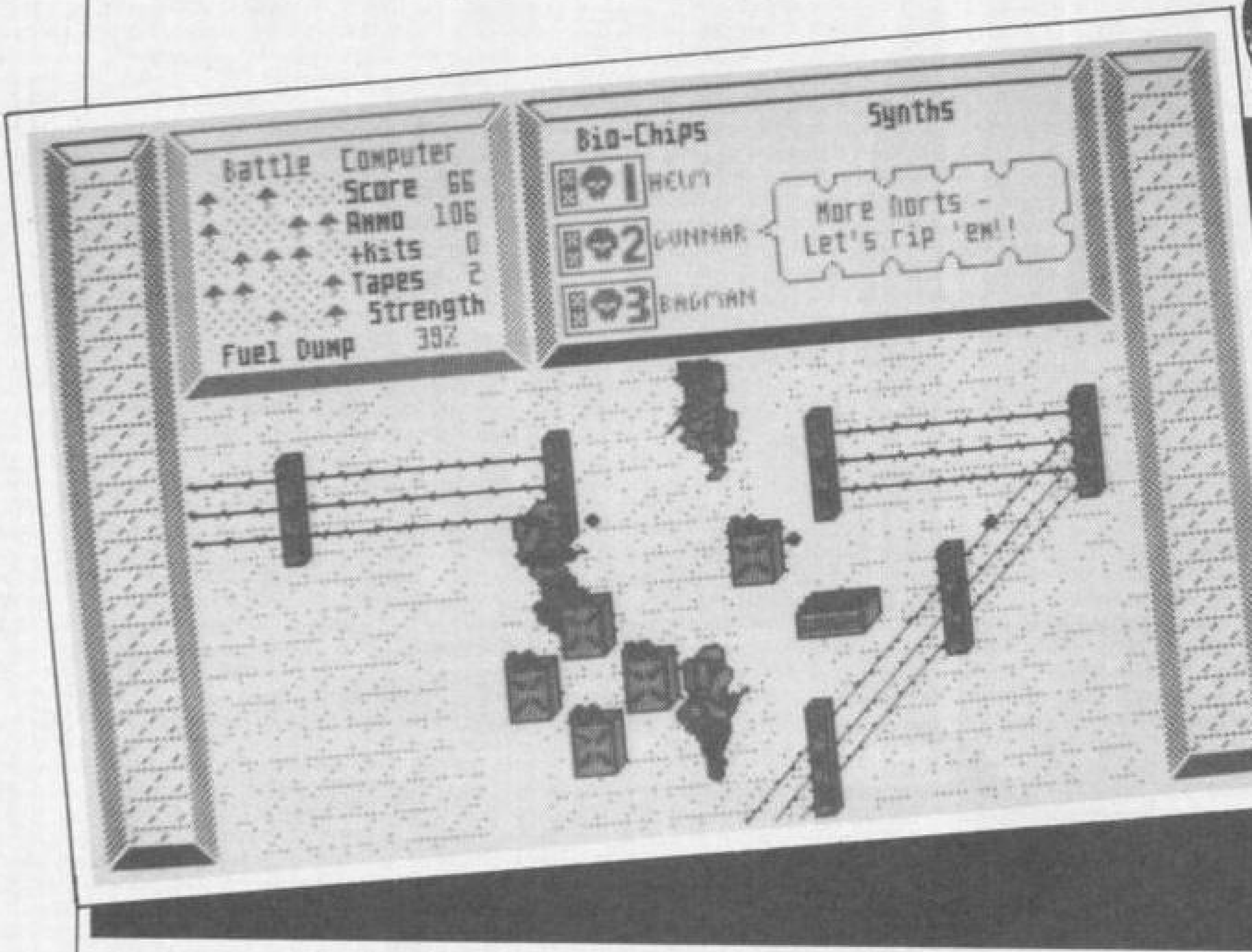
ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 65%
A certain amount due to the compulsion to get to the bottom.

VALUE FOR MONEY 58%
Considering it's not brilliant the 9 quid asking price seems a bit steep.

OVERALL 66%
Neat variant, but nothing more.

ROGUE TROOPER

Piranha, £8.95, joystick or keys



At the very edge of the galaxy lies Nu-Earth, a war-torn planet so ravaged by chemical warfare that no one can breathe its atmosphere or swim in its seas. No-one that is, except Rogue Trooper. Rogue is the fighting legend of Nu-Earth, genetically engineered to live and breathe in the chem-clouds of the planet. The blue-skinned warrior is the sole survivor of the Quartz massacre, where his entire regiment of Genetic Infantrymen was betrayed to the Norts and destroyed by their crack Sun Legion.

His only remaining companions are three of his GI buddies, Gunnar, Helm and Bagman. Their personalities were stored on bio-chips at the moment of their deaths, and they're now mounted on his gun, helmet and backpack respectively. Rogue now seeks revenge for their betrayal, but his quest has forced him to desert from his own side – the Southers. The traitor was filmed by the Millicom satellite's security cameras shortly before it was destroyed by the Norts. The wreckage is scattered over the surface of the Nu-Earth but the vid-tapes, in their armoured casings, have survived and can now provide the only concrete evidence of the traitor's identity.

The screen is split in two, with the top third being a window giving all the information required, and the remaining two-thirds being the playing area. In the top left there is the battle computer controlled by one of the buddies – Bagman. The battle computer shows a map of the terrain, and relevant info on the amount of ammunition remaining, the number of medi-kits being carried, the number of tapes found, your strength and your score. Buddies, Gunnar and Helm make firing more fierce and give extra protection to your head respectively. The top right is taken up by scrolling messages from Rogue's fellow GIs. Each has his own personality, for instance Gunnar has psychopathic tendencies and wants to shoot things just for the hell of it, he says things like 'let's grease some more Nort scum', luckily the others have more helpful things to say.

The playing area is a 3D wasteland with crumbling buildings, rad-deserts, graveyards, glass zones and various other decaying areas. Satellite wreckage is scattered throughout the many locations, among this Rogue can find the tapes, boxes of ammunition and medi-kits, all of which he picks up by walking into them. At the start of the game your strength is up to 100%, but as you walk around the zones and do battle with the Norts your health suffers. You are supplied with one medi-kit which is used once the strength goes below a certain percentage level. Medi-kits are essential survival equipment, so they must be searched for along with the vid-tapes.

As well as the Norts, Rogue must avoid enemy mines and pill-boxes. The pill-boxes can be finished off by a long barrage, but the mines cannot be destroyed at all, and drain a lot of your energy if walked into. Once all the tapes have been recovered, you must locate the Millicom space vehicle and only then can the traitor's identity be revealed, and at long last your buddies can be re-gened to their former GI existence.

Mass

CRITICISM

The positions of the various items (for instance tapes and medi-kits) are randomly selected at the start of each game, and this can lead to hours of fun as no two games of ROGUE TROOPER are alike. The graphics and animation of the characters are very nice indeed, although their movement sideways seems to be half the speed of that up and down the screen. This makes the game very tense if you're about die and need a medi-kit on the other side of the screen. I'm not sure though, if this is good or bad.

Richard

CRITICISM

There's nothing really very new in this game, but for some reason it's hideously addictive and playable - probably because it's so simple to get to grips with. The graphics are nothing to marvel at, although the use of colour is very good, brightening up what could have been a bit of a dull game. The status window is very helpful giving all the indications of what is happening around you. ROGUE TROOPER isn't brilliant, but it's a pleasant game that should keep you occupied for some time.

Paul

CRITICISM

The element of randomness in the setting up of the objects means that this game is slightly different each time you play (although the map is always the same). There is very little to do besides move and fire, but this does prove to be curiously addictive due to the instant playability of the game and the beautiful graphics. Sideways movement is very annoying due to the difference in speed between vertical and horizontal scrolling, but this does not detract too much from what is an absorbing and instantly appealing game.

PRESENTATION 78%
Uncomplicated controls.

GRAPHICS 72%
Nice and colourful, slow screen flick.

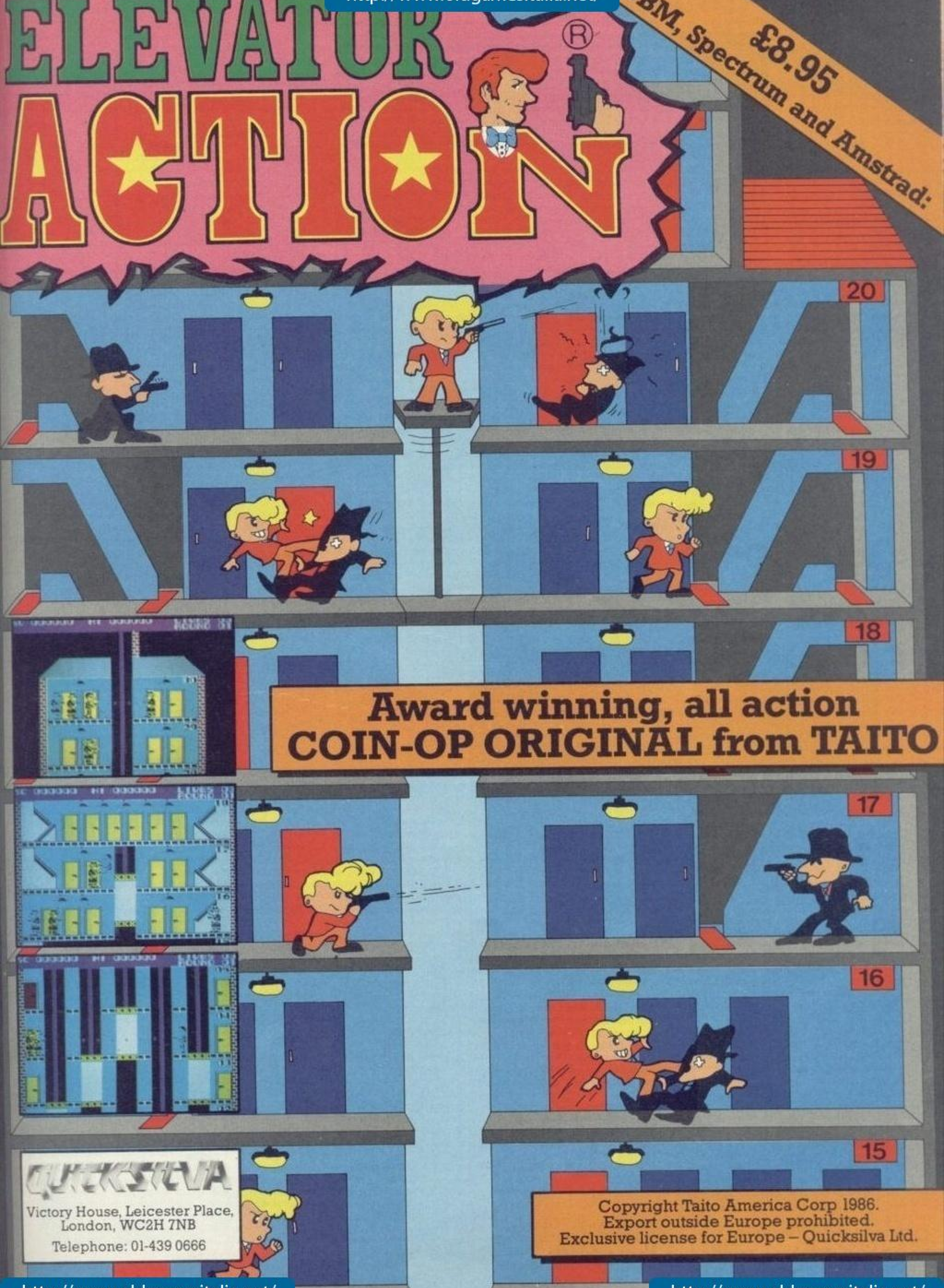
SOUND 63%
No tune, basic FX.

PLAYABILITY 79%
No problems here, although characters move slowly sideways.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 75%
Plenty of variation.

VALUE FOR MONEY 73%
A very reasonable price, well worth a look.

OVERALL 76%
Should appeal to 2000AD fans.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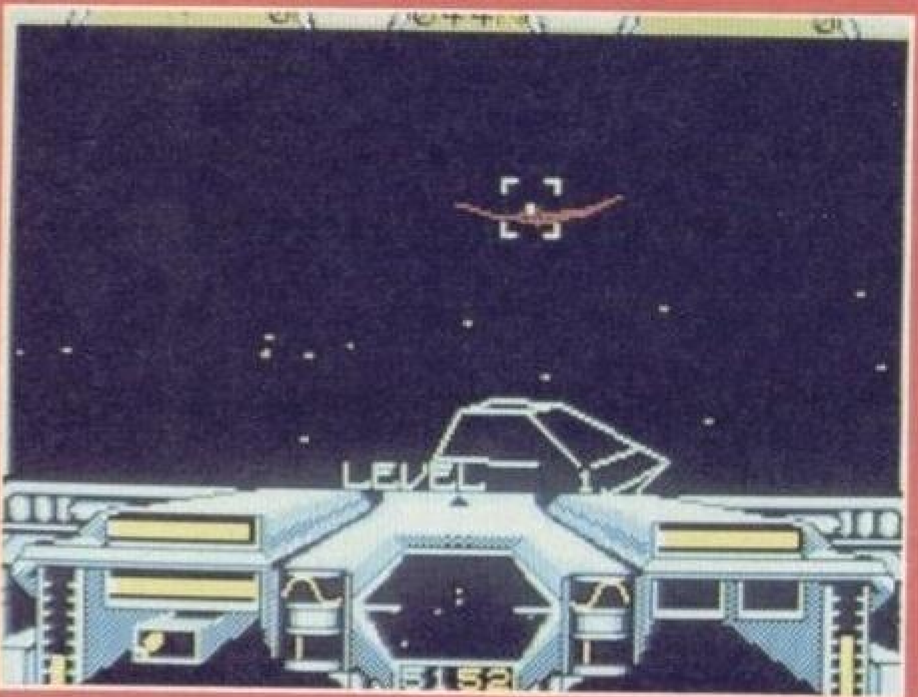
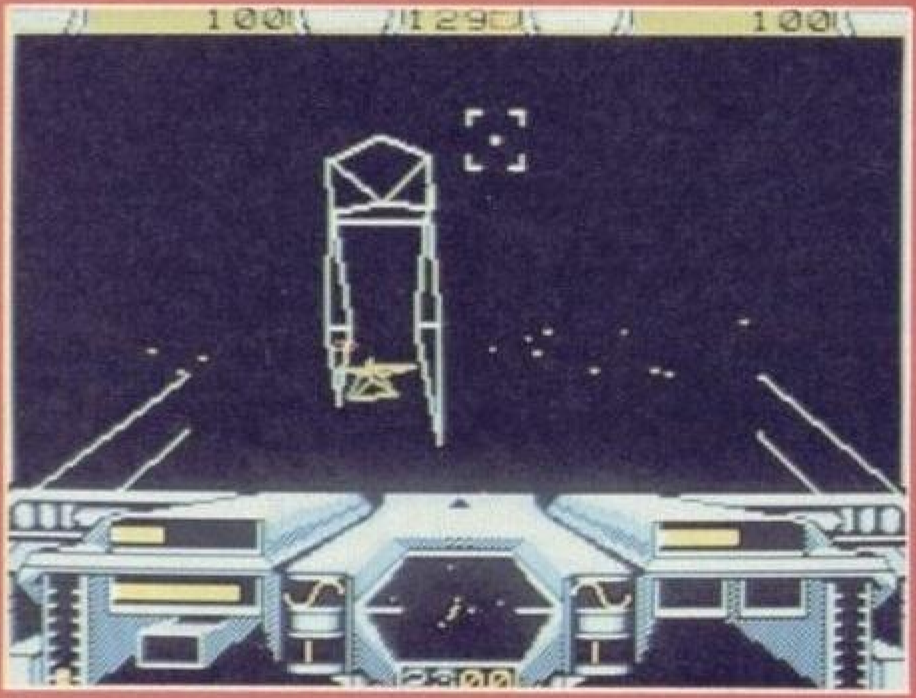
STAR GLIDER

Rainbird, £14.95 cass, £19.95 disk, joystick and/or keys

For years there had been peace and prosperity on the planet of Novenia. The sentinel guards had successfully defended the planet taking no chances with anything that looked unfriendly – they just blew it to bits! All was well until one day a fatal flaw was found in the programming of sentinels, one day a rare flock of Interstellar Stargliders (a sort of large cosmic bird) wandered into sentinel airspace, and although they were harmless the sentinels finished off every last one. Not wishing such an episode to happen again, the sentinels were immediately re-programmed to leave this strange form of bird alone. The Egrons witnessed this affair with great excitement and devised a plan by which they would attack the planet with fighters disguised as Stargliders. Once they had broken through there was no stopping them. Novenia fell and the planet became a desolate battle-scarred waste.





Jason and Katra, at one time sentinel repair workers, looked on from one of Novenia's moons. Together they set off to conquer the invasion force in nothing more than an obsolete fighter (an ancient AGAV), only capable of carrying two missiles at a time and destroying smaller craft with its laser.

There are seventeen different types of attack craft in all, each one has a different function, but all of them deadly. Each one appears in full 3D as you fly over the barren wasteland of the planet trying to find and destroy the infamous Starglider One. The AGAV can be controlled by either the joystick or keyboard, though there is much more to the controls than that. The sights can be of the fixed or floating mount types. The fixed mount type always point in the direction that the ship is travelling, whereas the floating type leads the ship, generally the first type are easier to fly with, but the second allow you to target the enemy more accurately, you have to choose which is the best for you. The sights can also have a centreing system which returns the sights to the centre when in floating mode. This can be in the X or Y directions or both.

■ This is definitely my game of the month, the vector graphics are fast, the action continuous, and the whole thing is so steeped in atmosphere. It may only be a shoot em up, but it's a clever one that should keep everyone enthralled for the next few weeks. The packaging is just as good as the game, with a 64 page novella that puts you in the mood for saving the planet. Although ELITE is still my favourite 3D game, STARGLIDER came close to topping it. I hope that the follow up to STARGLIDER has the same fast action with the depth of ELITE.

Anthony

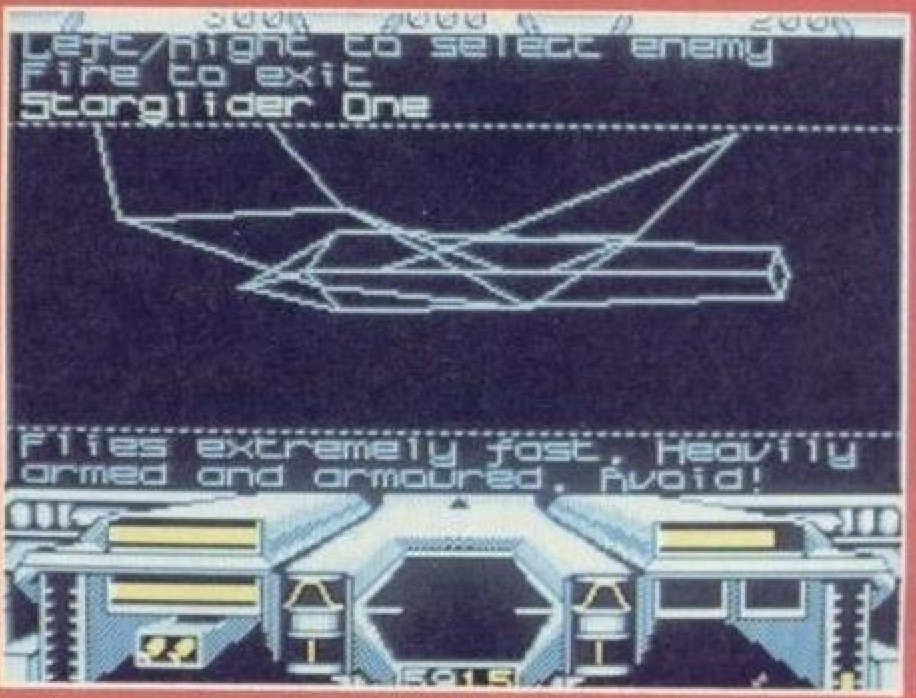
When you start the game you are given one missile. At each silo you can collect more missiles if there is any space for them on the fighter, and of course, if the silo has any left.

Just blasting everything in sight can get a little tedious you may think, but as you progress through the game more weapons are at your disposal; energy pods let the AGAV go just that little longer before it has to refuel; a rear view scanner lets you retreat while still firing at an enemy, and the super-missile blows up just about every thing on the map. All this blasting leaves your ship in a bad state of repair, this is where the silos come in. By entering these, the AGAV's shields are replenished, any missiles that the silo contains are bolted onto your ship (up to a maximum of two) and the laser energy is replenished.

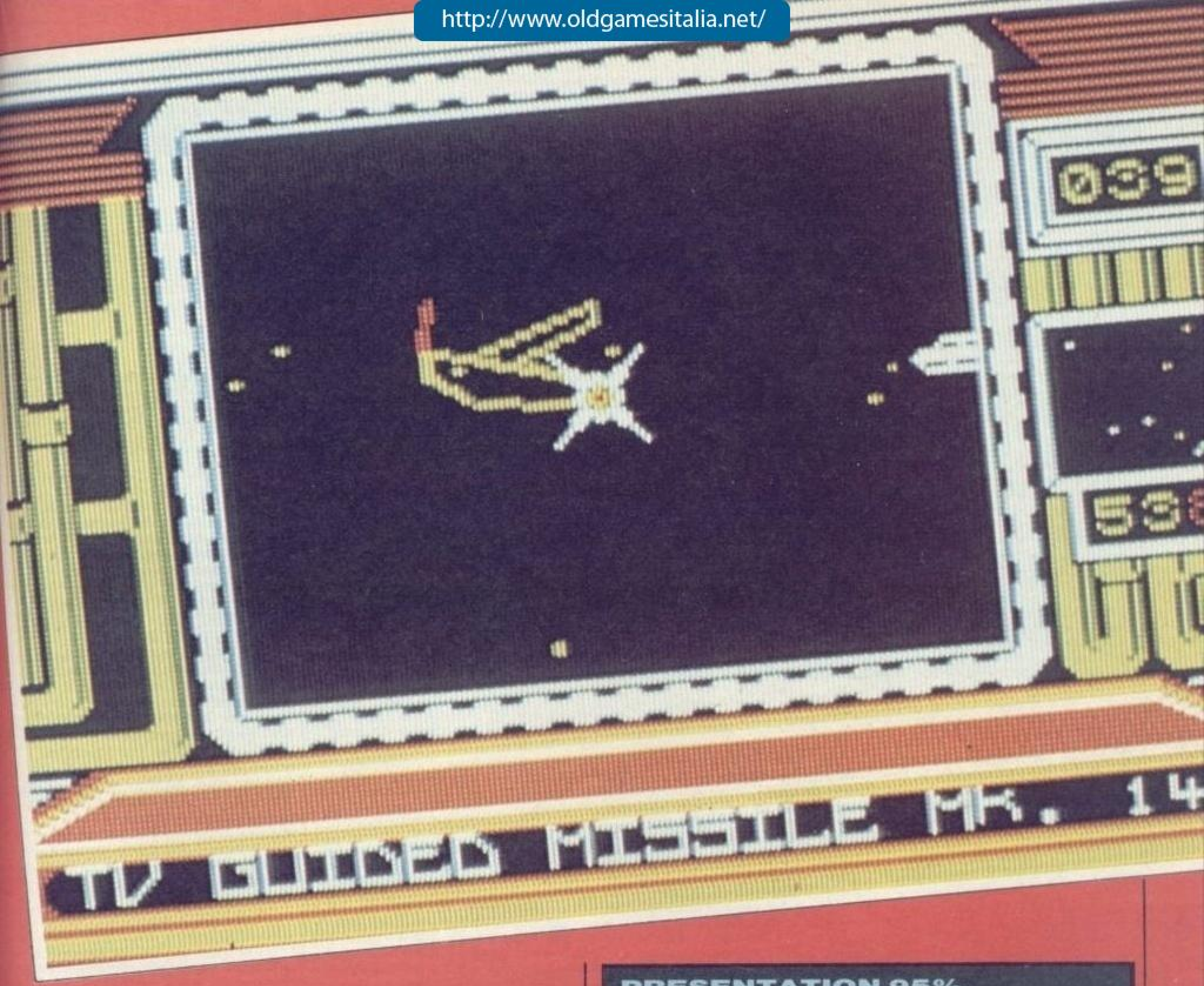
■ As soon as I clapped eyes on STARGLIDER I thought it would be another ELITE type shoot'em up – but it's not – it's far more. The fight sequences are lovely and fast – great for the adrenalin. I'm not usually keen on 3D games but this one had me totally engrossed, there's nothing like blasting flapping flying things. It's a shame that there's very little sound. The booklet that came with it was more like a novel and I didn't look forward to sifting through it. Luckily for me I didn't have to for they also included a briefer instruction booklet. I always find working things out for myself so much more fun. There is a lot more to STARGLIDER than I first thought and I'm sure I'll be playing it for weeks to come. An excellent game.

Mass

While in the silo it is possible to interrogate the silo computer and find out all the data it contains on the many enemies scattered about the surface. Mind you getting into the inside of the silo in the first place is not made any easier by the fact that they spin, so the AGAV must be quickly flown into the entrance when the mouth is


Left/Right to select enemy
Fire to exit
Starglider One

Flies extremely fast. Heavily armed and armoured. Avoid!



facing the ship. Because the AGAV is a rather old form of fighter, the silos don't have the facilities to refuel your energy pods. Instead the ship must be flown between the twin towers that mark the power lines feeding the underground complex.

On the ground you can see lights showing up the position of the power lines, flying along these markers at a low altitude should refuel the ship in around 30 seconds. On top of the third tower is a yellow peak which just invites you to blow it off, unfortunately this turns the towers off and so the AGAV can no longer refuel there, there is however another twist. On the higher levels of the game the aliens stop the towers from working and you must shoot the tops of the towers off to get them going again.

At some time on your travels around the planet you should meet with a fully armed, and very dangerous, Starglider. The only way to dispose of it is to hit it with two missiles. On higher levels this number increases, though if you have a super missile then the task is much easier. The next level is reached by scoring 10,000 points, but the game becomes much harder with the aliens throwing everything they have at the AGAV.

■ It's very easy to just dismiss STARGLIDER as just another 3D vector shoot 'em up. However, it does go beyond this and into the realms of a future flight combat simulator. I mean, a lot of games have had spinning 3D graphics but none have included things such as the flapping wings on the drones and the Starglider itself. It's a pity that there was no tune or speech but then with a game as playable as this, which absolutely reeks of atmosphere, who needs it? If you enjoyed the combat bits in ELITE and want something a bit faster and better, then this is the one – it's the ultimate in blasters.

Richard

The AGAV's instrument panel uses horizontal and vertical bars to display info on the ship, while the position of the ship is shown using numbers. If the height bar falls too low then an audible warning is given that the ship may crash, but the other levels, such as shield strength and energy, must be watched closely. One final surprise is that there are several special missions that pop up from time to time.

PRESENTATION 95%
Good packaging plus Novella to get you in the mood.

GRAPHICS 90%
Fast 3D vector graphics.

SOUND 75%
No digitised speech but fair laser and explosion sounds.

PLAYABILITY 88%
After a few games the control becomes second nature.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 91%
Blasting plus brainwork, what more do you want?

VALUE FOR MONEY 81%
A bit steep at £14.95 for the cassette game.

OVERALL 90%
The first of the new 3D war games.

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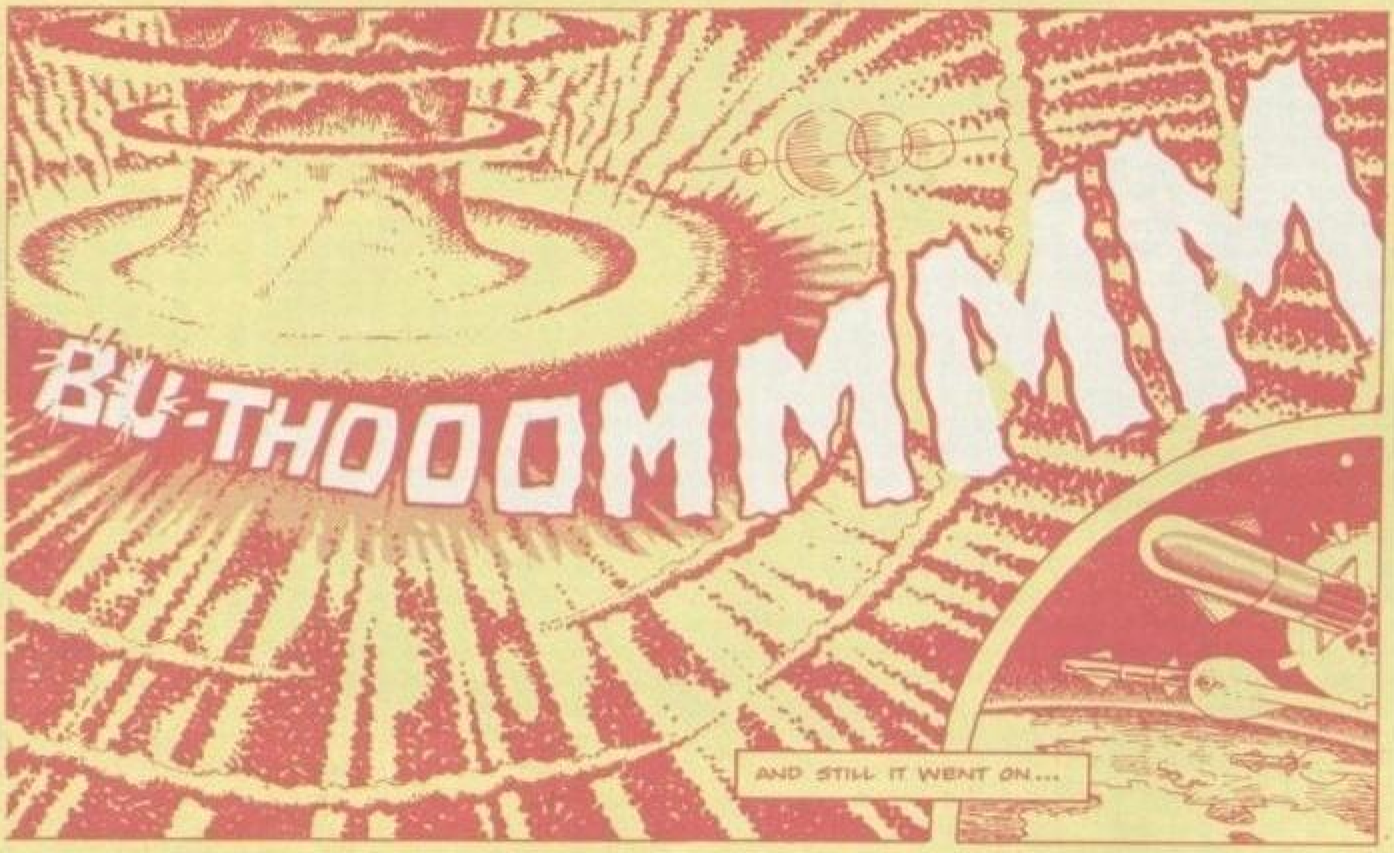
ANTIRIAD

Palace, £8.95 cass, joystick only


BU-THOOOMMMMM
AND STILL IT WENT ON...

Thus ended man's existence as we have come to know it. The world was plunged into the depths of a nuclear winter and the land became a barren wasteland, totally devoid of life of any sort.

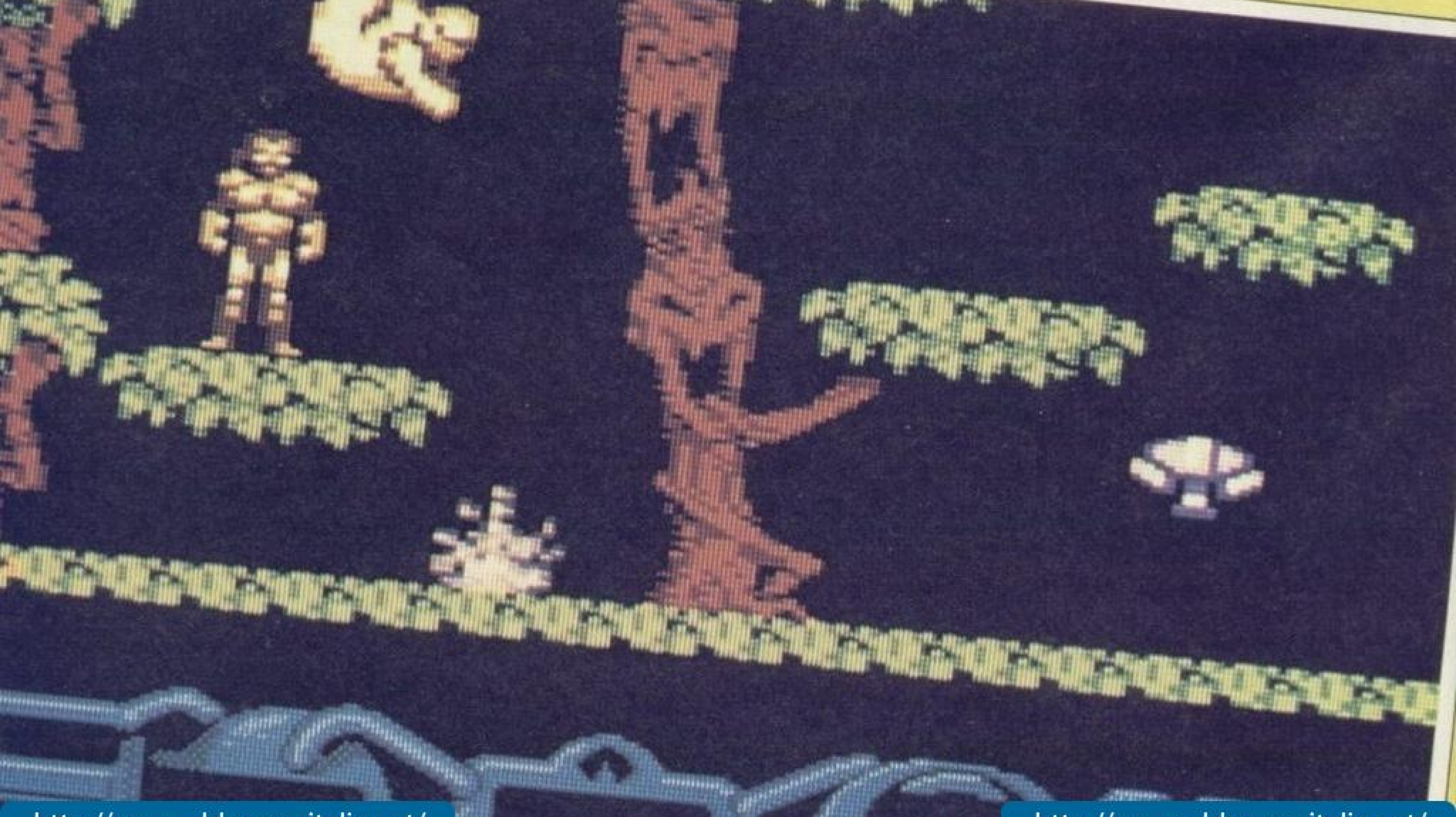
Time passed, the world spun on, and with it evolution restarted its weary path. From the chaos there emerged a new race, strong, virile and hardy. The people of this new race came to know a simple and peaceful life, and technology was regarded as the root of all evil. Only occasionally the memories of the past catastrophe returned to haunt the elders' thoughts.

These people contentedly carried on with their primitive way of life until one day the sun forgot to dawn. Hideous shapes appeared on the horizon, strange flying machines bearing weapons of extreme power. Terrified and bewildered, the villagers ran in disarray, scared and confused. The attackers were savage and merciless, and their weapons were sophisticated. The new earthlings didn't stand a chance against these invaders, and soon the entire planet capitulated. All able-

■ **This is slick. Excellently produced from beginning to end – right from the comic book, which contains one of the best story lines I have seen with any game. The graphics have surpassed Palace's usual standard – well thought out, superbly defined and making great use of the Amstrad's capabilities, especially using the split screen for the status and action sections. The animation only falters slightly when there are lots of sprites on the screen at once – then the action slows down. ANTIRIAD certainly offers lots of challenge, maybe too much for some, as lives disappear rather quickly. But, having said that, when a suitable route is found through the rooms then loss of life becomes minimal. If you want something that's going to keep you occupied for a long time this is the one to get.**

Richard

▶ ***Right at the beginning of the adventure Tal stands alone, unprotected – at the merciless grasp of the ape creature.***



bodied humans were captured and sent to work mining the planet's valuable ores, while the tyrants ruled from their stronghold deep inside a volcano.

Unknown to their oppressors, the elders reared a new born male child in a secret camp, training him to become their champion in combat. This man was to be the saviour of their race. His name is Tal. The elders showed him the blueprints of an ancient suit of armour. This was the infamous Sacred Armour of Antiriad, which legend has it renders the wearer invincible.

■ We have been waiting a long time for this one on the Amstrad and it is no disappointment. The graphics are very colourful (better than the Commodore 64 version) and it's a very highly polished piece of programming. There are a few bad points, the game is a little hard in the early stages and the activation of the suit and collection of the antigrav boots is a very hit and miss affair. A good game that should keep everyone happy.

Anthony

The adventure proper begins in a twisted forest below the alien's volcano base. Tal's overall objective is to penetrate the alien stronghold and shut down their power by accessing and destroying the nuclear power room at the very top of the volcano. Controlling Tal, the first thing to do is to wind your way through the forest to locate the Sacred Armour itself. Once located, the status screen will engage and light up with all the relevant information. Of the two bar graphs on the left hand side, the top one illustrates the suit's energy level (additional power packs can be located and fitted), the lower one shows Tal's personal energy.

■ What first struck me about ANTIRIAD was the superb graphics and the amazing animation of the main character. When these are coupled with a great haunting tune, the game has terrific atmosphere from start to finish. Not an easy game to get used to, but like all great games, once mastered the screens become second nature. Unfortunately in getting accustomed to the screens lives are lost rather rapidly and I feel this may be off-putting to certain people. As for it's lastability, well I'm not too sure, nevertheless it's great fun to play.

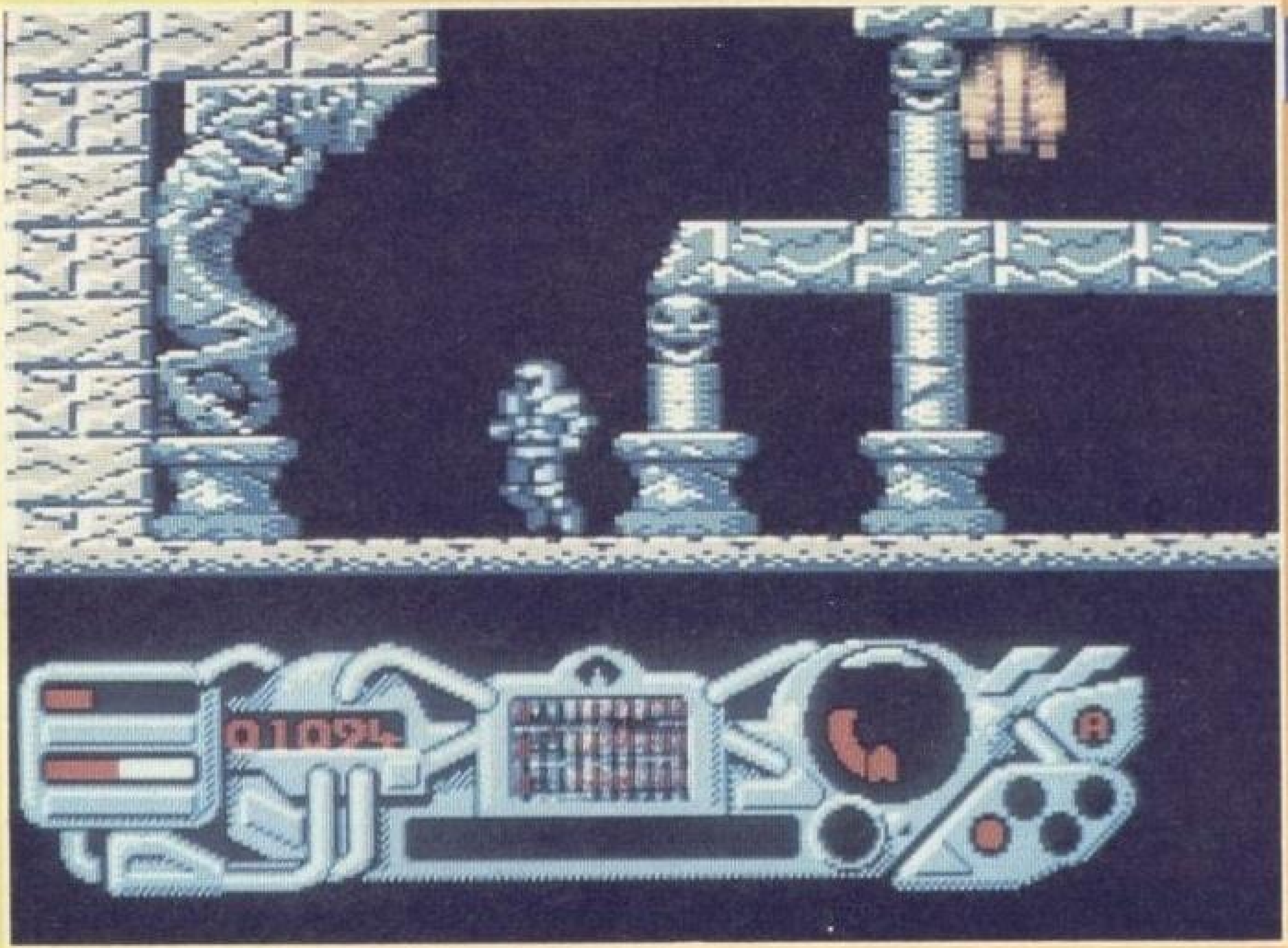
Mass

The forest is crawling with all manner of hideous beasts. Collision with Tal eliminates these, however it also serves to reduce his energy level substantially. Luckily Tal is equipped with a bag of stones which he can throw one at a time. Some of the forest guards can be knocked out with one hit whereas others may take several.

Tal needs to collect several articles in order to make the suit fully operational. The first are the Antigravity boots which enable him to fly. Other items include the implosion mine which is used to destroy the stronghold; a particle negator, which is a shield to protect Tal from the high level of radiation; and a pulsar beam to wipe out the alien aggressors.

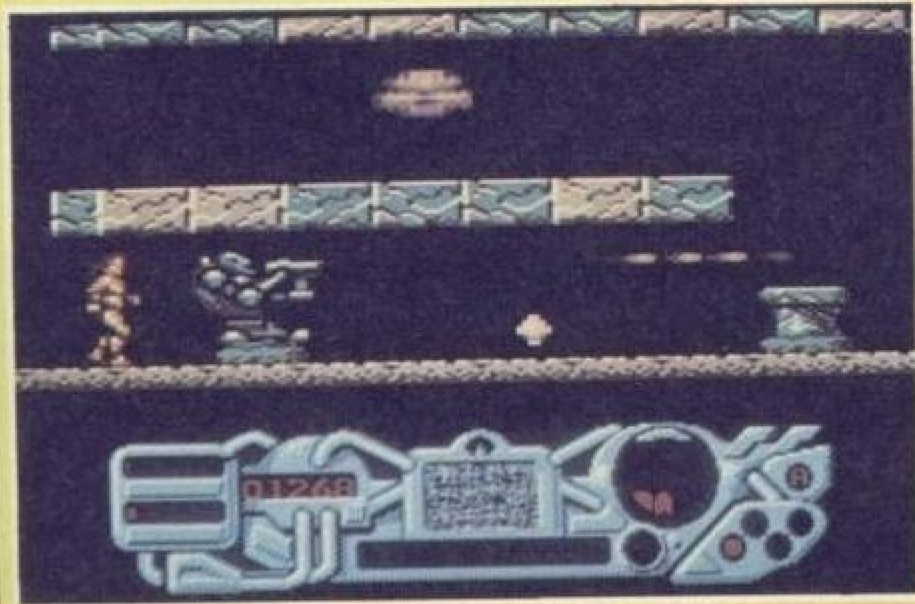
As Tal makes his way up into the volcano the scenery changes as each location flicks by. The derelict city with its great monoliths and savage gun emplacements, the caves of the dragons of fire, and finally the alien stronghold.

Most of the action involves leaping from platform to platform as Tal makes his way to the top. Here he can finally implant the implosion mine in the nuclear generator to destroy the complex, and so free his race from eternal slavery and doom.



Equipped with suit Tal makes his weary way through the labyrinth of passages that make up the volcano.

Having lost the armour Tal goes in search of some power packs to recharge his energy. However, an alien android is not being exactly friendly.

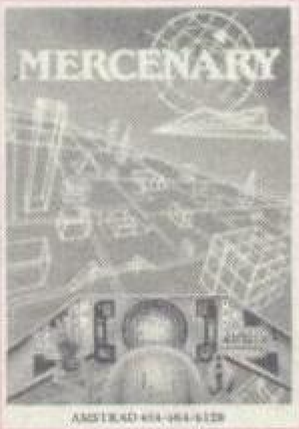


PRESENTATION 94%
One of the slickest packages ever.
GRAPHICS 94%
Beautiful – more an art form.
SOUND 92%
Very atmospheric track on title screen.
PLAYABILITY 89%
A bit difficult to start with . . .
ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 90%
. . . but once you're in, you're hooked.
VALUE FOR MONEY 91%
Well worth forking out for.
OVERALL 90%
A superb package from beginning to end.

AMTIX! Accolade

MERCENARY

Novagen, £9.95 cass, joystick and keys

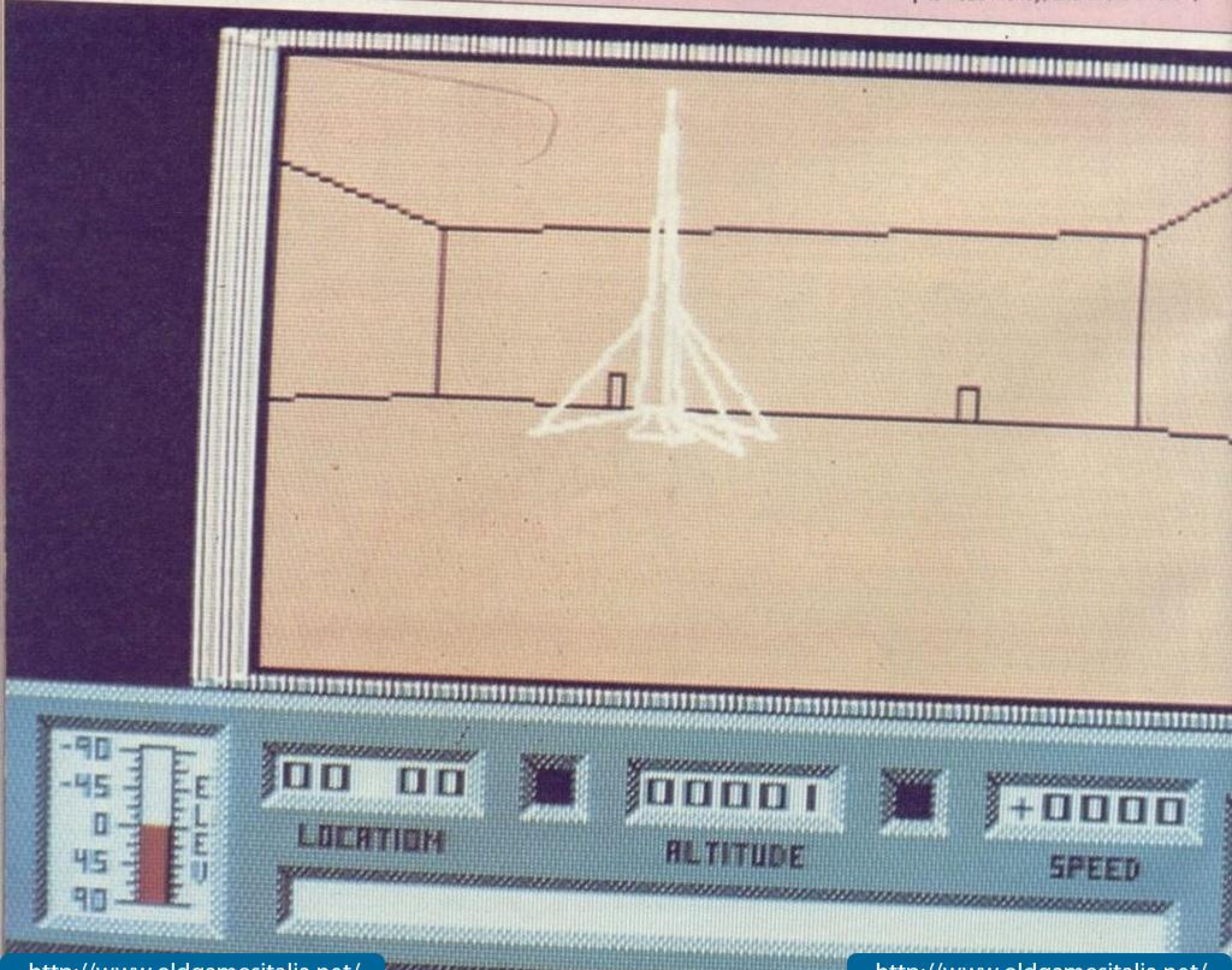


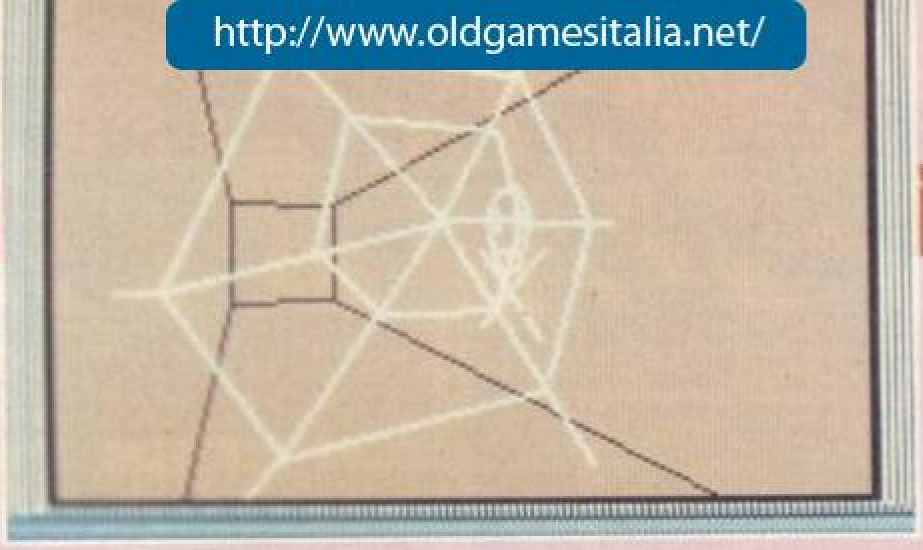
It is the 21st century, the final frontier has been breached and with it comes the inevitable wars. Mercenary parties were hired to fight political wars on distant planets, success was the main objective, but money was the motive. After years of being in space it's time to return to home-planet Earth. Your war-torn ship, the Prestium, creaks as it slips into Nova-Drive and begins the long journey home. There was not an inkling that in fifteen seconds the Prestium would be no more than a heap of rusting metal. Benson, the on board computer, runs some routine system checks which he had no time for back in the last engagement. After all, your helmet PC's ability to make priority decisions correctly could mean the difference between life and death. Several warning lights flicker into life as Benson displays graphs and charts showing an anti-matter imbalance in the main Nova-Drive. Simultaneously he shuts it down. Caught in the gravitational pull of the planet Targ the Prestium hurtles towards its surface, the retro rockets having no real effect.

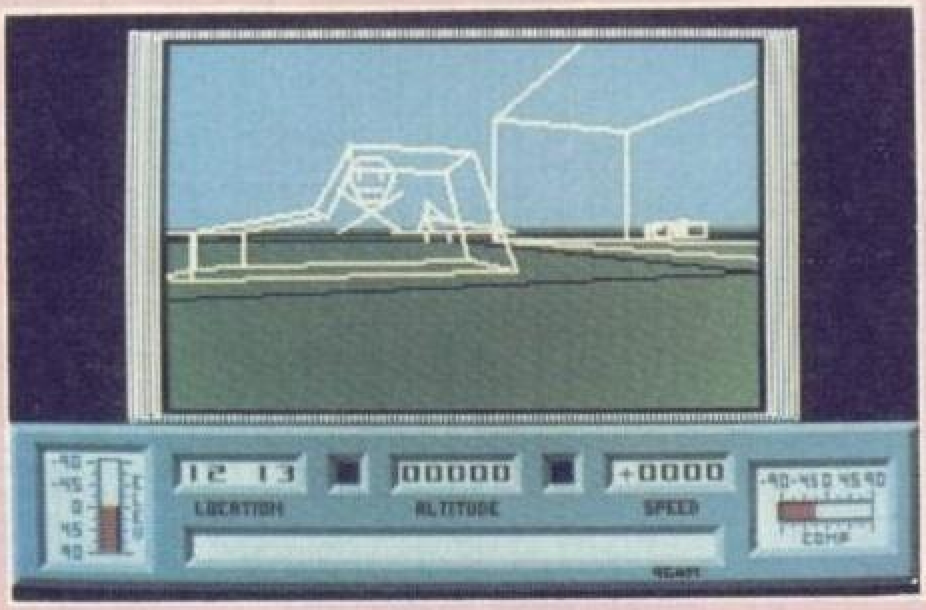
■ It's very hard to come to terms with the actual size of MERCENARY as it has well over a hundred locations with each being a game in its own right. The vector graphics are absolutely amazing without the slightest hint of a flicker or a jerk. It's the sort of awe inspiring game that you instantly become attached to and one that would keep even the more easily disgruntled gamester playing for days. Brilliant in concept, excellent to play.

Mass

At the last moment the ship returns to manual control (Benson doesn't like to take the blame for anything), but little can be done except to make sure that you and Benson survive the landing. With the Prestium now destroyed, you must find a ship and escape from Targ. To escape you are also going to need money, and this is where







your talents as a mercenary will come in handy. But who should you help? The peace loving inhabitants of the planet, the Palyars, or the invading Mechoids, an evil and belligerent race. Diplomacy will earn you the trust of both sides, but being a mercenary you are only on one side, your own, and so the quest begins, with you trying to swindle both sides in the great war.

Mercenary puts you right in the field of an on-going battle trying to escape from the planet while, of course, trying to make as much money as possible. To begin with you have 9000 credits, and a small, fairly slow craft known as a Dominion Dart. The planet's surface is represented by 3D vector graphics with the roads showing up in black and the surface buildings in white. The vector graphics do not have hidden line removal which makes them slightly faster. As the whole game is scaled you can only see objects from a certain distance depending on their size, though they are best appreciated from around 100 metres in the air. The Prestium is also equipped with a projectile releaser, which acts as a weapon. As the bullets can only go at a certain speed, it is possible for you to fire and then overtake your bullets.

As well as the numerous ground features, there are also many underground bases which form a whole game in themselves, and are the key to escaping from the planet. Underground you will find many of the other ships that can be bought hired or stolen, including the interstellar craft that will get you off the planet. Not all fly, some of them are simply very fast landspeeders which transport you from one point on the map to another. Each ship has different handling characteristics and abilities; so, by selecting the right ship it is possible to manoeuvre around the planet quite easily.

Above the planet is a cloud base which can be flown up to and explored. The creators of this base have no laws governing the safety of the people so entering an apparently safe door may lead to taking a nasty plunge back to the planet's surface. Shooting buildings makes them crumble to the ground, bending, buckling and spinning to destruction as they go. The race who constructed the buildings take offence at you destroying their handiwork and will send a ship to shoot yours out of the sky. The city is not the only place of interest in the game as several focal points are to be found outside the city. Although if you decide to take a round trip around the planet it will only take a mere ten minutes before you return to your starting point. Some of the objects to be found on the surface are also animated, such as the radar dish that is found at one corner of the map.

Mercenary in itself is quite a monolith of puzzling, but at one time or another you are going to finish it, so **Novagen** have included the ability to load a new data-set at a later date (which will be included in the disk version) called the *Second City*, but this time the game is made harder as there are many new buildings and underground areas to explore.

0-45 0 45 90
COMP

■ STARGLIDER may have been my favourite game of the month but MERCENARY has got to be my favourite game of all time. The program has so much in it that even after finishing it you will play it again to try and find another way of doing it. The action is very fast, some of the fastest 3D graphics on the Amstrad, and the plot is the deepest of any game of this type, including ELITE. What more is there to say except that it should be a sell out on the AMSTRAD so get it quickly before your local runs out.

anthony

■ Okay, so maybe I've never been able to actually complete MERCENARY but I have always been enthralled by it. It's a magical concept that has been executed so perfectly that you just view the game as a consistent whole rather than on the basis of good bits here and there. The animation is some of the best I've seen on the Amstrad, with judder free vector graphics that really create a substantial amount of atmosphere. Getting used to the controls may take some time but having said that when you gain confidence it is possible to take to the skies and manoeuvre with grace. MERCENARY is unique, it's the best way to start a New Year!

Richard

PRESENTATION 90%
A clear display makes the game visually acceptable.

GRAPHICS 90%
Well defined 3D vector graphics.

SOUND 85%
Great use of white noise for the engine effects.

PLAYABILITY 90%
A little tricky to land at first, but easy to get the hang of.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 95%
One that can be played forever.

VALUE FOR MONEY 91%
A great game at twice the price.

OVERALL 94%
The best game to grace the Amstrad in months.

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TOPGUN

Ocean, £9.95 cass, joystick and keys

Dangers come fast and furious when travelling at speeds of mach 2 plus, but for Maverick it's a way of life. As a top fighter pilot in the American Navy, Maverick has proven himself worthy, both with skill and courage in his F-14 Tomcat, of the title 'Topgun'.

Topgun is an aerial combat flight simulation that can be played with two players or against computer controlled aircraft. The bottom third of the screen shows the instrumentation panels of the two aircraft and the top shows the view from the cockpits of the fighters. If playing against the computer your control panels and view are on the left of the screen. In the centre of each control panel is the on-board radar that shows the enemy craft in relation to yourself (the dot in the middle of the radar).

To the left of the radar there are indicators that show damage sustained, warning indicators that show when the enemy is locking onto you, and when a missile is launched, the weapons mode you are in (Machine gun/Cannon, Side Winder heat seeking missiles and Magnesium flares) and your own missile lock indicator. To the right there are indicators to show whether you are climbing or diving, whether the enemy is above or below you and your thrust indicator. In the top left and right of your cockpit veiw your altitude and speed (measure in mach, for example 1.20).

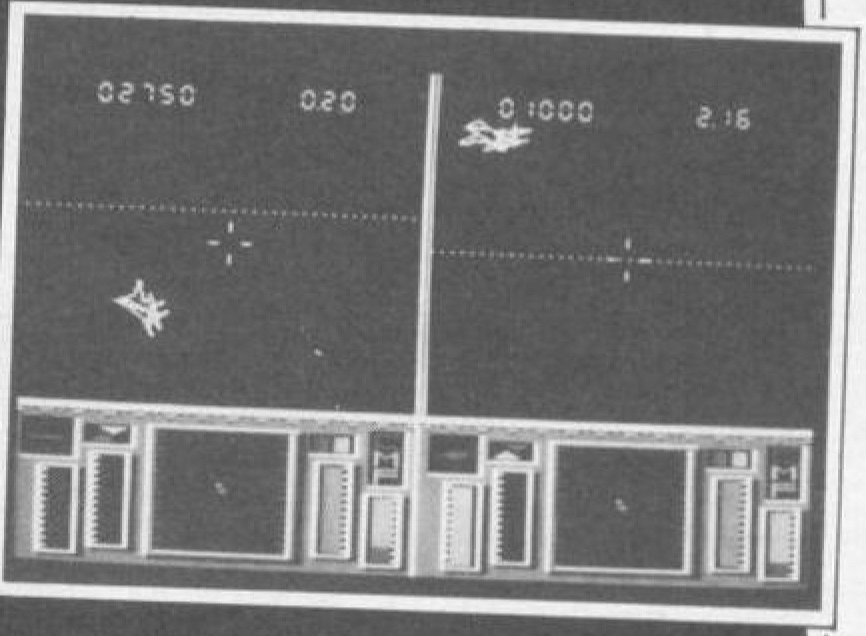
Your weapon selection is denoted on screen by a variation in the shape of sights in the main screen and the relevant letter highlighted on the console. Cross hair sights denote machine gun/cannon and a square sight denotes missile mode. No sights at all show that you are in flares mode.

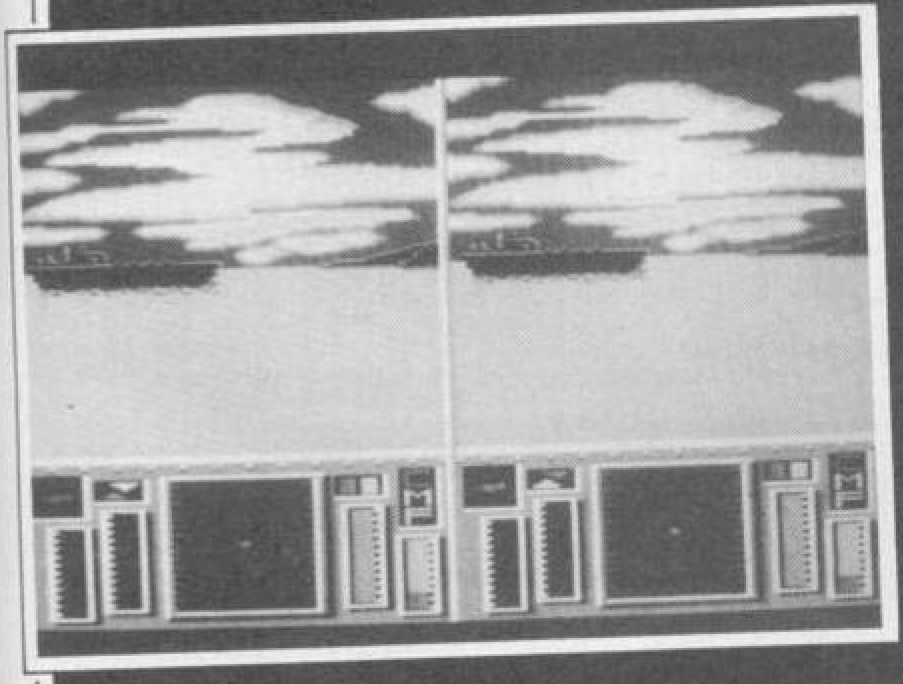
The machine gun/cannon is fired when your opponent's aircraft is in your sights but 25 direct hits on the craft are required to destroy it. A hit is denoted by a border flash and visual indication is shown on the damage indicator on the console. Constant firing of the guns will cause them to overheat so they must be used sparingly.

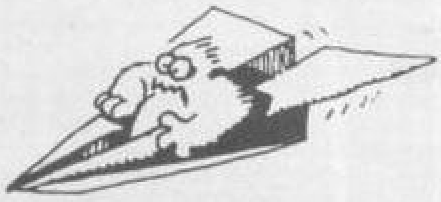
To fire a missile at your opponent it is necessary to keep him within your sights for three seconds which then enables the heat seeking element to 'lock on'. Only one hit is required from a missile to destroy the aircraft.

Flares are not weapons but are used to decoy missiles fired at you by the enemy. These must be used with precision timing or they will have no effect. It is possible to out manoeuvre a heat seeking missile which will burn out after 20 seconds.

On the one player mode against the computer you must defeat and destroy three enemy aircraft before progressing onto the next mission which will pit you against three faster and more manoeuvrable aircraft. In the two player mode each player is given three aircraft and the winner will be the one who destroys all his opponents fighters first.







Richard

CRITICISM

On first sight TOPGUN doesn't look much; a spinning horizon with the odd plane to shoot at. However, after playing it for some time I actually got quite into it. The animation works very well, and creates a good atmosphere, it's very difficult to describe why it works – it's just very playable. Play it to experience it!

Mass

CRITICISM

TOPGUN is one of the best aircraft fight simulations I have seen in a long while. The playability, although slightly difficult to get used to, becomes superb. The first levels against the computer is where all the practice is done as the enemy planes are not too hard to blow out of the sky. What makes this game so enjoyable to play is that you are able to see the combat from both pilots' views. This is no end of help as, although you have warning bleeps, you are also able to see missiles launched at you. The two player game is excellent as it's all down to the reactions and flying skills of the players involved. It's an excellent simulation and great fun to play.

Anthony

CRITICISM

TOPGUN really got us going around the office, we just had to find out who was the best – (I am too modest to tell you who came out on top!) – If we just went by what's on the screen then this game would be boring, but somehow the ingredient of addictiveness was added and makes the game fun to play. The two player mode is very enjoyable due the interaction between the two players – (rabbit punches, right hook, knee to the groin etc.) Great fun that anyone should be able to take up.

PRESENTATION 89%
Excellent loading screen, easy controls.

GRAPHICS 85%
Fast 3D vector graphics.

SOUND 82%
Nice theme tune, average sound FX.

PLAYABILITY 93%
Once mastered it's all action.

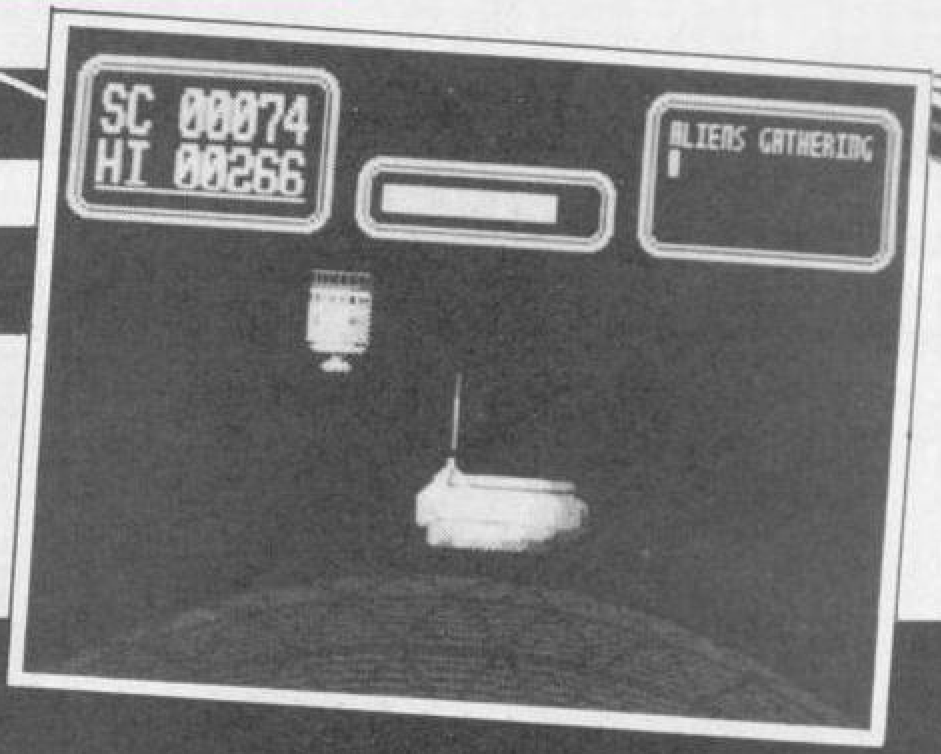
ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 90%
Satisfaction galour.

VALUE FOR MONEY 82%
Bit steep for a flight sim.

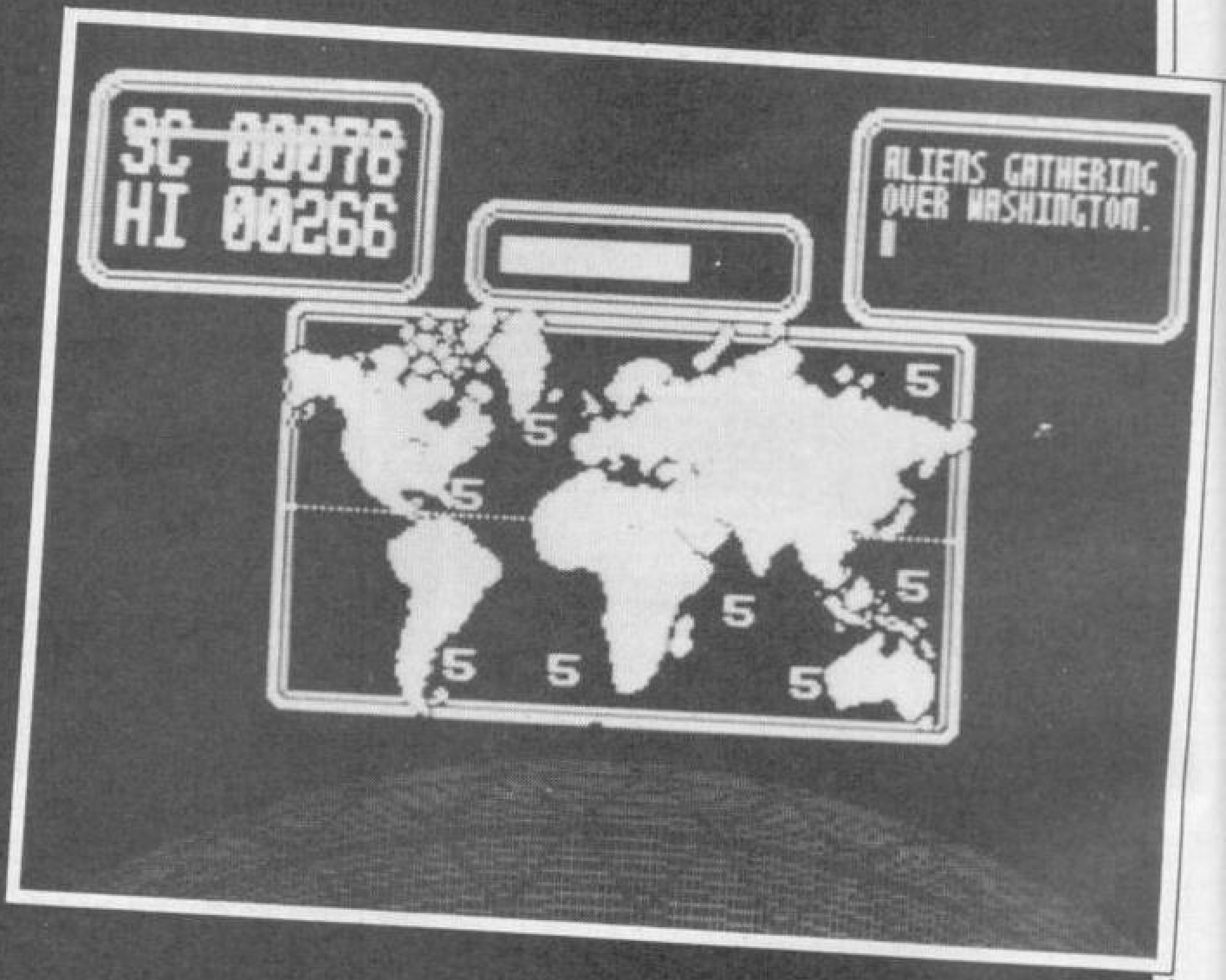
OVERALL 89%
Great air combat simulation.

DEFCOM

Quicksilva, £8.95, joystick or keys



SC 00074
HI 00266
ALIENS GATHERING



SC 00078
HI 00266
ALIENS GATHERING OVER WASHINGTON.

After 48 years of total peace on earth no one could remember how to fight. This was a slight problem, as the Earth's entire orbiting defence network was suddenly taken over and turned into a weapon by a passing fleet of marauding aliens. After hours of deliberation by the Emergency Council it was decided that only one man could save the world - that man is Captain Nick Diamond, the reigning Xeno world champion. With the only remaining anti aircraft weapon left, the bog-standard Eagle Class E751, daring Nick sets off to save the Earth.

Anthony

CRITICISM

I am afraid that the best thing about DEFCOM is the music. The game itself was very boring. The program is very fast but there is little to keep you going. Where it fails as a shoot-em-up is hard to say, it just lacks addictive qualities. The idea of having different weapons as the game progresses was wasted on this game, in fact there is very little to indicate a change of weapon at all. One I won't be buying this Chrissy.

Mass

CRITICISM

The aim is simple but the game is far from that. Alien ships come fast and furious giving you very little time to react and blast them away. The graphics are very quick indeed but I'm afraid the colouring is somewhat plain and uninspiring. As you progress there is a selection of weapons but no matter which weapon I used I couldn't destroy a single satellite nor did I ever reach the stage where I received the double laser. Perhaps I missed something but for the hell of me I could not see what.

On screen you control the E751 with its single beam laser, with the earth revolving below you. If you survive the onslaught of aliens firing at you after 1000 points you obtain a double laser. Each time alien missiles strike home (that's you basically) your energy bar decreases – you have only one craft so no energy means death and end of game. Scrolling messages tell you where the aliens are massing. Accessing the map will show your position and thus you are able to direct your craft. Your aim is to simply destroy all the orbiting satellites.

Richard

CRITICISM

Here we are again, great music shame about the game. Quite honestly it's just too fast to be adequately playable. I mean, it's all very well the action being fast and furious but when it gets to this stage it's just beyond a joke. DEFCOM could have been a lot better if the scenery was a bit more inspiring rather than simply one colour on the action part of the screen – it just left me feeling a bit disinterested.

PRESENTATION 55%
witty scenario, straight forward controls.

GRAPHICS 52%
Bland, plain graphics.

SOUND 47%
Nice tune, best played with FX off.

PLAYABILITY 50%
Fast, ney, very fast . . .

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 49%
. . . too fast to become engrossed in.

VALUE FOR MONEY 45%
Too pricey for what it is.

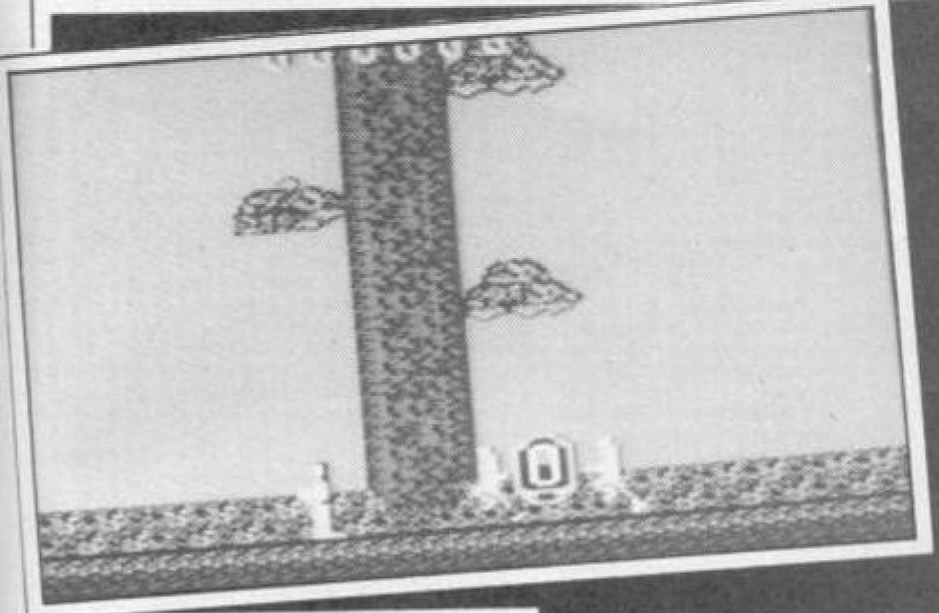
OVERALL 50%
Nice idea, poor shoot'em up.

LEGEND OF KAGE

Imagine, £8.95 cass, £12.95 disk, joystick or keys

Romance is in the air, the trees are blooming and Kage, a young oriental Ninja is taking his lady love, Princess Kiri, out for a quite walk in some secluded woods at the back of beyond. When what should happen but some nasty and mean evil Dragon King appears and snatches her clean away. Gosh. Luckily Kage is the strongest ninja there ever was! Yes! With Kage under your control you must guide him through his quest for love to retrieve the pouting one.

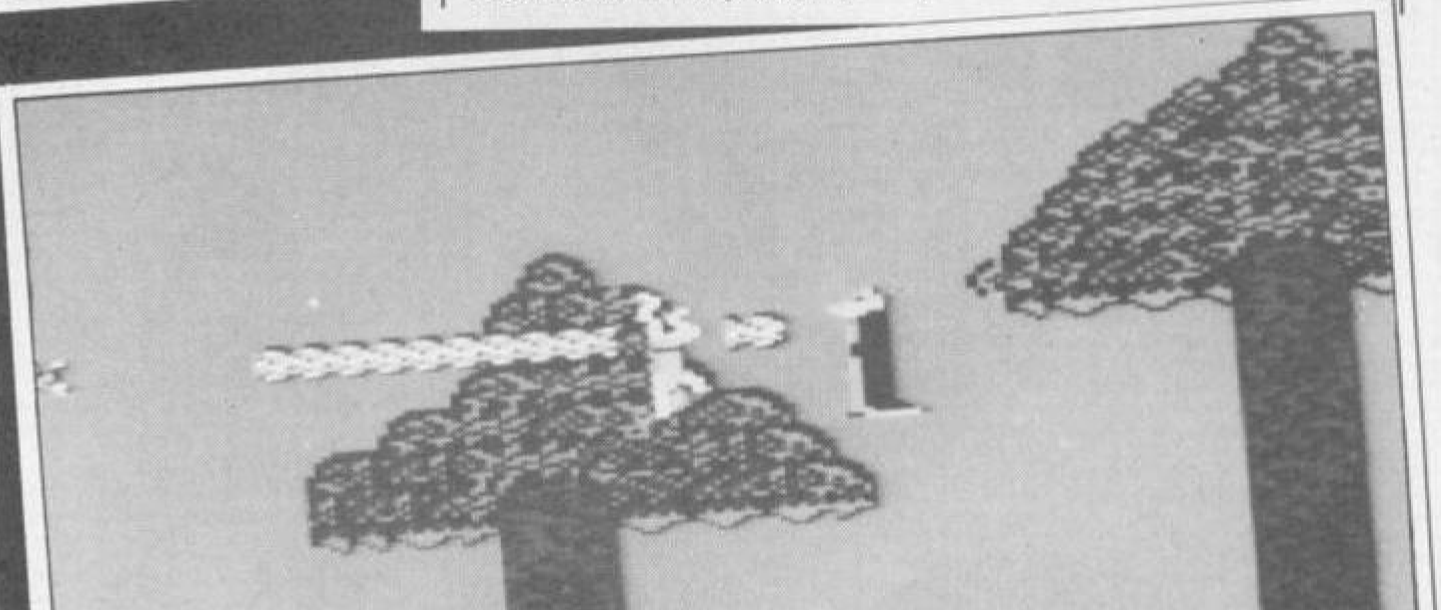
The game begins with a short animated introduction illustrating the capture scene. Stopping only to pick up his supply of suriken stars and his trusty flailing stick Kage charges after her determined to have her back or to perish himself.



On the first of the four sections Kage must make his way towards the castle of the Dragon King. En route he will encounter black Ninjas who work for the oppressive king. They will attempt to thwart your mission; the best move is to kill the lot of them either by throwing a star – they can be thrown in three directions, either diagonally up, straight ahead or diagonally down – or by flailing them with your stick. Once ten have been wiped out then the Dragon King will start to get just a teensy weensy bit worried and will come after you breathing fire in his path. Needless to say, any contact with old curry breath is lethal and should be avoided at all costs. Kage can move in a variety of ways: either trogging from left to right or take off in leaps and bounds to ascend into the trees – but beware this may make things more difficult.

Having disposed of furnace features he will make a hasty retreat to his castle so follow him! Kage finds himself at the foot of the palace but the palace is surrounded by even more Ninjas. Again ten must be defeated before Kage can scale the wall – watch out for the Ninjas doing turtle impressions in the river. The third part of the quest has Kage climbing up the wall. To assist you there are some helpfully placed directional arrows which should make things just that little bit easier. The final part of this illustious task is to actually penetrate the fiery one's abode to search for your girlie.

The poor girl has been trapped in the uppermost turret of the top floor. If you can make it past the Ninja guards your old hot-headed acquaintance will be back in force so stand well back or you'll get frazzled. Having got him out of the way release soppy Kiri and you can continue your soppy, girlie, lovey dovey, wimpy, soft walk in the forest. Yuch!



Richard

CRITICISM

Now, this is hard. I've been playing it on and off for a couple of days and I still haven't got to blast old furnace features. This game was certainly meant to last – you'll be playing it for ages! However, the graphics aren't exactly mind boggling, to be honest they're let down by being blocky and somewhat dull. But nevertheless LEGEND OF KAGE is quite an enjoyable game when you forget about all the unpleasant bits and simply get on with with solving the quest.

Anthony

CRITICISM

Not another beat-em-up? Well yes, but it's not a bad one. The action is very fast, as is the way you die. Taking to the trees is quite fun as you leap from branch to branch. It reminded me of one of those flying dreams where you just keep leaping from place to place as though you were on the moon. My biggest quibble is with the Dragon King. You don't get much of a change to get away from him if he breathes fire at you. If you are in range then you lose another life. Even after all that I find the game very enjoyable, and one I won't put down until I get through to the next level.

Mass

CRITICISM

The first thing I noticed about LEGEND OF KAGE was the rather poorly animated characters – blocky and jerky in a dull and uninspiring scenery. Having said that once you begin to play the leaping around is found to be very smooth. You're in the thick of the action as soon as you start with ninja warriors coming at you from all angles. The fire breathing Dragon King is a bit of a pain to kill but once you develop a tactic he can be easily disposed of. On the whole this is a very playable game but it's a shame the graphics are not of the same standard.

PRESENTATION 61%
Nothing miraculous, fair though.

GRAPHICS 65%
A bit blocky and small, but quite well animated.

SOUND 70%
Continuous in game tune.

PLAYABILITY 68%
Quite difficult to get into in the short term.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 70%
It'll take some time before you've completed it.

VALUE FOR MONEY 60%
A bit over the real value of the game.

OVERALL 68%
The arcade game wasn't anything special either.

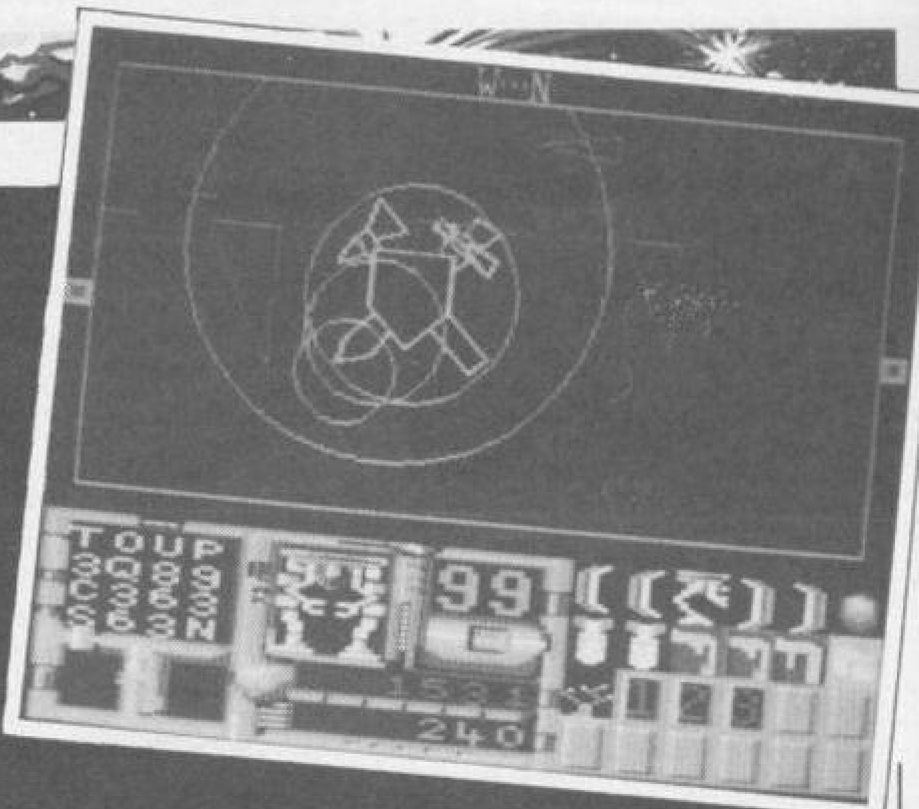
HIVE

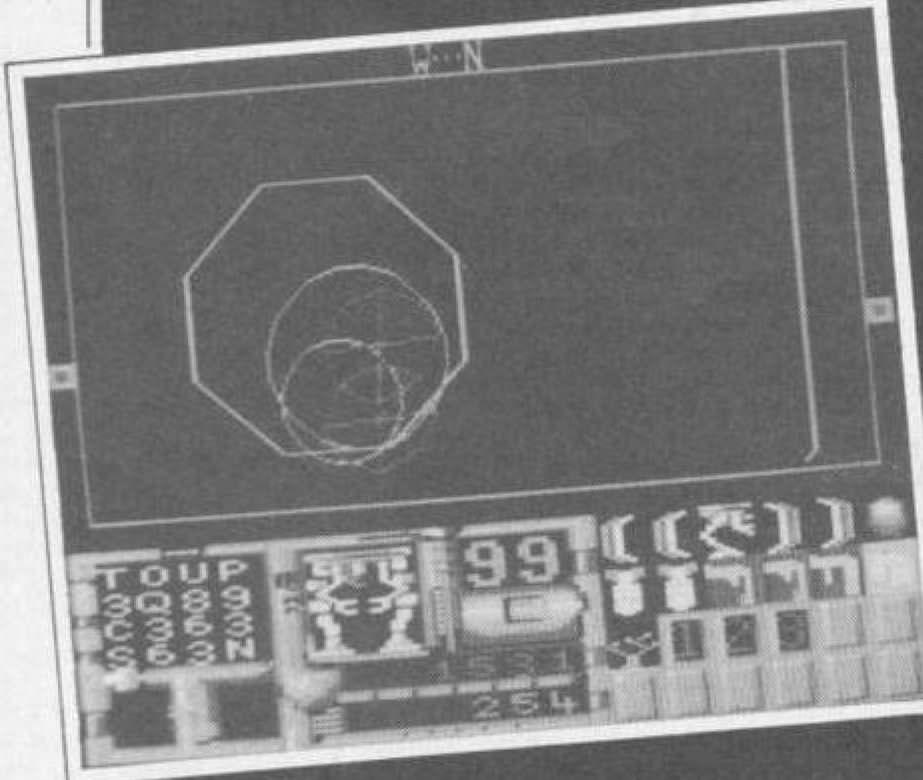
Firebird, £9.95 cass, joystick or keys

Where they came from will remain a mystery, but their intentions were more than clear. It was the systematic destruction of all life on Earth. Somewhere on our planet, in some remote area unknown to man, nature took a strange course. The reptiles succumbed to the mammals, but the mammals in turn were replaced by the bees. Their differing thought patterns and the concept of a 'Single Mind' allowed them to develop faster than our own kind. Finally, in their highly complex Hive ships they attacked, and nothing and no-one could stop them.

Our world belonged to the Bees. Only in one small area of the Artic could people live without fear of attack, for in the low temperatures the bees could not function. But life was hard, no crops could be grown, so the population resorted to hydrophonics (which proved very unsatisfactory as it produced such a low yield), and used geothermal energy to power their machines. At last one of the greatest scientists of the time developed the Grasshopper ship, a gargantuan amongst the many failed insectoid ships that the population hoped at one time to use as a form of camouflage against the enemy.

This ship was different, it was indistinguishable from the Hive guards at medium range. It was hoped this ship could penetrate the largest of the Hive ships and destroy the Queen. Once she was gone the community would break up and chaos would set in, the people could then return to their cities and formulate a greater plan for the destruction of the whole insectoid race.





In *Hive* you are in control of the 'Grasshopper' ship and must try to negotiate your way through the eight levels of the Hive. The action is viewed head-on as you make your way down the tunnels of the hive. The walls of the passages are illustrated by circular (or hexagonal if you're nearer the Queen) rings which, as you progress, come towards you – any beasts that are following your trail will appear to come from within the tunnel.

The ship can carry up to 24 objects at a time, but the more that is carried the faster the energy diminishes. To replenish the ships energy, pylons must be picked up as they are seen. Carrying no pylons means the energy goes down, carry two or more and the energy increases. If any of the many guardians manages to hit the ship then the energy is sapped away, and if the ship's energy falls below zero then it is destroyed and you have to start again.

Instead of the more usual SAVE and LOAD game options, a code (shown in the lower left corner), must be entered when you want to finish off playing for that session. The code changes every time the Grasshopper passes through a gate. On your way through the maze of tunnels, many new gadgets are to be found to fit to the ship. These include special lasers, many different keys, bombs, a freeze ray and plenty of treasure.

As well as all the more usual meanies – ground stings, high spikes, webs – there are also jailers which roam about the place. If they capture you then the ship's energy returns to 99 per cent and you will find yourself in prison somewhere on level two. If at this stage you are not carrying the prison key then you must restart the game.

Mass — CRITICISM

For me HIVE never really took off. Although a rather original idea the minimality of the graphics on screen gave me no real incentive to carry on. The problem I found is that I didn't know where the hell I was – maybe with the map I might have got further but as it stood I was not really impressed with the overall gameplay. I feel HIVE to be the sort of game that, with a lot of play, you can really get into but it's not one for me. Great in concept but a little slow to grab hold of you.

Anthony — CRITICISM

I think that my opinion of HIVE may have been marred because I didn't have a full understanding of the game. I was quite impressed with the speed and idea but found progress very hard, I just kept going round in circles. The markers, to give you some sort of sense of direction, are a very good idea and added to the game, as did the futuristic form of aliens. My favourite was the Jailer. For me this game is a good deal of fun, though my opinion of the game may improve when they send me the map that will be included with the final packaging.

Richard — CRITICISM

Hummm, what we have here is a good game, but not in the respect of the actual player itself more that it is an achievement of programming. There appears to be so much in the game that I couldn't really get to grips with it all at once. Maybe if they had concentrated of ease of play rather than getting too many ideas at once then it might have appealed to me more, but at the moment it just doesn't inspire me too much – maybe in time I'll get to like HIVE.

PRESENTATION 85%
Detailed instructions to ease you into the game.

GRAPHICS 65%
Fast 3D vector graphics but nothing special.

SOUND 65%
A few bleeps and whistles, adequate but could be better.

PLAYABILITY 85%
Quick to master but steers like a cow.

ADDICTIVE QUALITIES 75%
The deeper you go the more you want to play, but not instantly appealing.

VALUE FOR MONEY 75%
A reasonable price for an arcade adventure of this quality.

OVERALL 80%
A game that should interest the arcade and strategy player alike.

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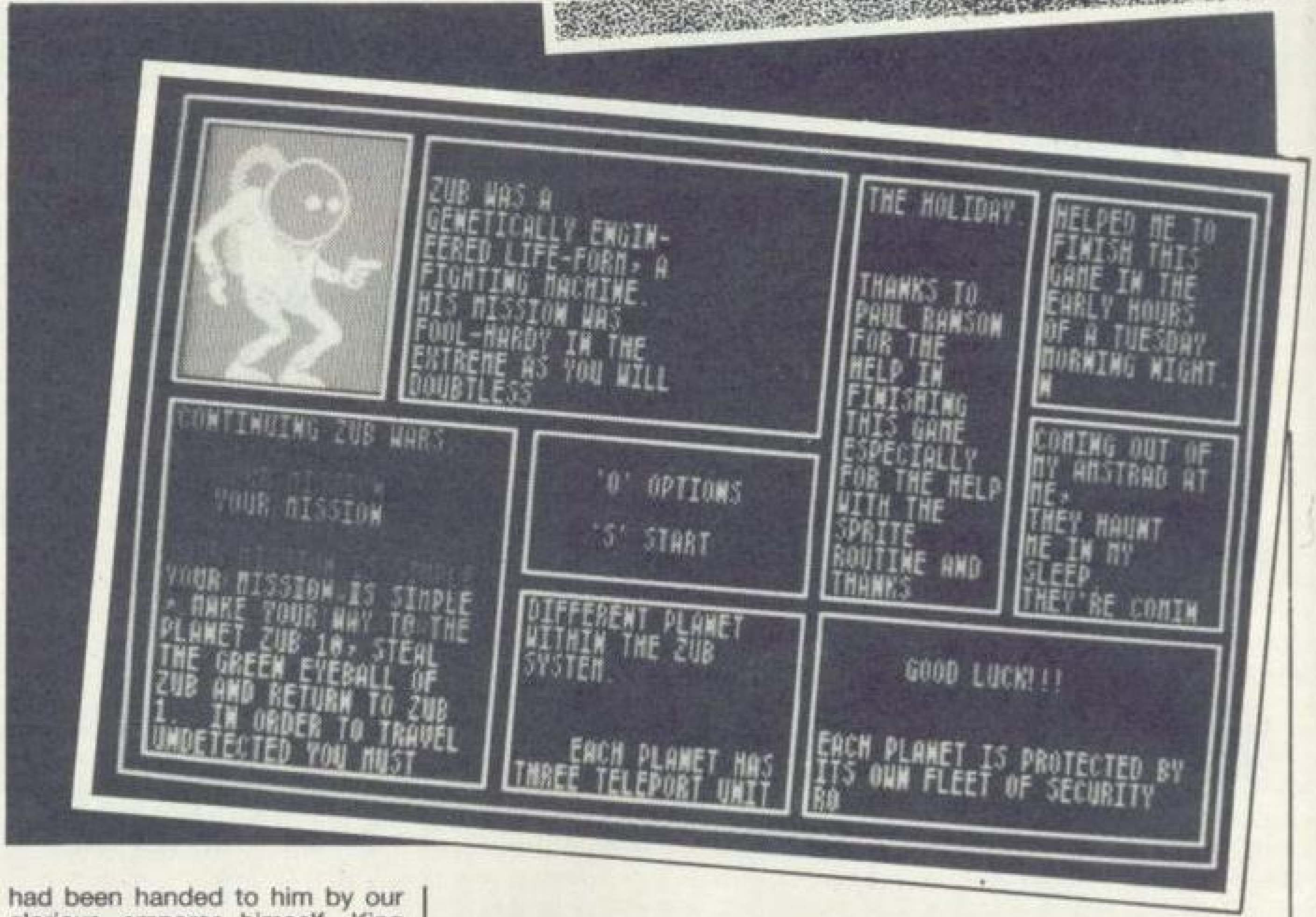
ZUB

Mastertronic, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys



ZUB WAS A
GENETICALLY ENGIN-
EERED LIFE-FORM, A
FIGHTING MACHINE.
HIS MISSION WAS
FOOL-HARDY IN THE
EXTREME AS YOU WILL
DOUBTLESS

THE HOLIDAY.

THANKS TO
PAUL RAWSON
FOR THE
HELP IN
FINISHING
THIS GAME
ESPECIALLY
FOR THE HELP
WITH THE
SPRITE
ROUTINE AND
THANKS

HELPED ME TO
FINISH THIS
GAME IN THE
EARLY HOURS
OF A TUESDAY
MORNING NIGHT.
M

CONTINUING ZUB WARS

YOUR MISSION

YOUR MISSION IS SIMPLE
- MAKE YOUR WAY TO THE
PLANET ZUB 10, STEAL
THE GREEN EYEBALL OF
ZUB AND RETURN TO ZUB
1. IN ORDER TO TRAVEL
UNDETECTED YOU MUST

'O' OPTIONS

'S' START

COMING OUT OF
MY AMSTRAD AT
ME.
THEY HAUNT
ME IN MY
SLEEP
THEY'RE COMIN

DIFFERENT PLANET
WITHIN THE ZUB
SYSTEM.

EACH PLANET HAS
THREE TELEPORT UNIT

GOOD LUCK!!!

EACH PLANET IS PROTECTED BY
ITS OWN FLEET OF SECURITY
RO

Far, far, away in a distant solar system lies the galaxy of Zub. In the galaxy is a world; the world is called Zub. On Zub there is Zub city wherein live the Zub race. One particular member of the Zub race is Zub or to give him his full title; Private Third Class Zub in the second glorious army of Zub 1. Unfortunately he was not the happiest creature in Zub, in fact Zub was totally and utterly zubbed off with his present situation which consisted of sitting outside of sergeant Zub's office awaiting an important message. His knees were trembling, a lone tear rolled down his eye stalk. If he had a brow it would have needed wiping, but he hadn't so it didn't.

ZUB is just one of those games that doesn't look much fun when you're watching it, but once you've played it a couple of times you find yourself hooked. It must one of the few games that have attracted some attention from everyone, the art department included. The concept from beginning to the end is unique, the graphics and sound are incredibly good – and as for the title screen well . . . Find out for yourself. For three quid this is an excellent buy and is an absolute must for your collection.

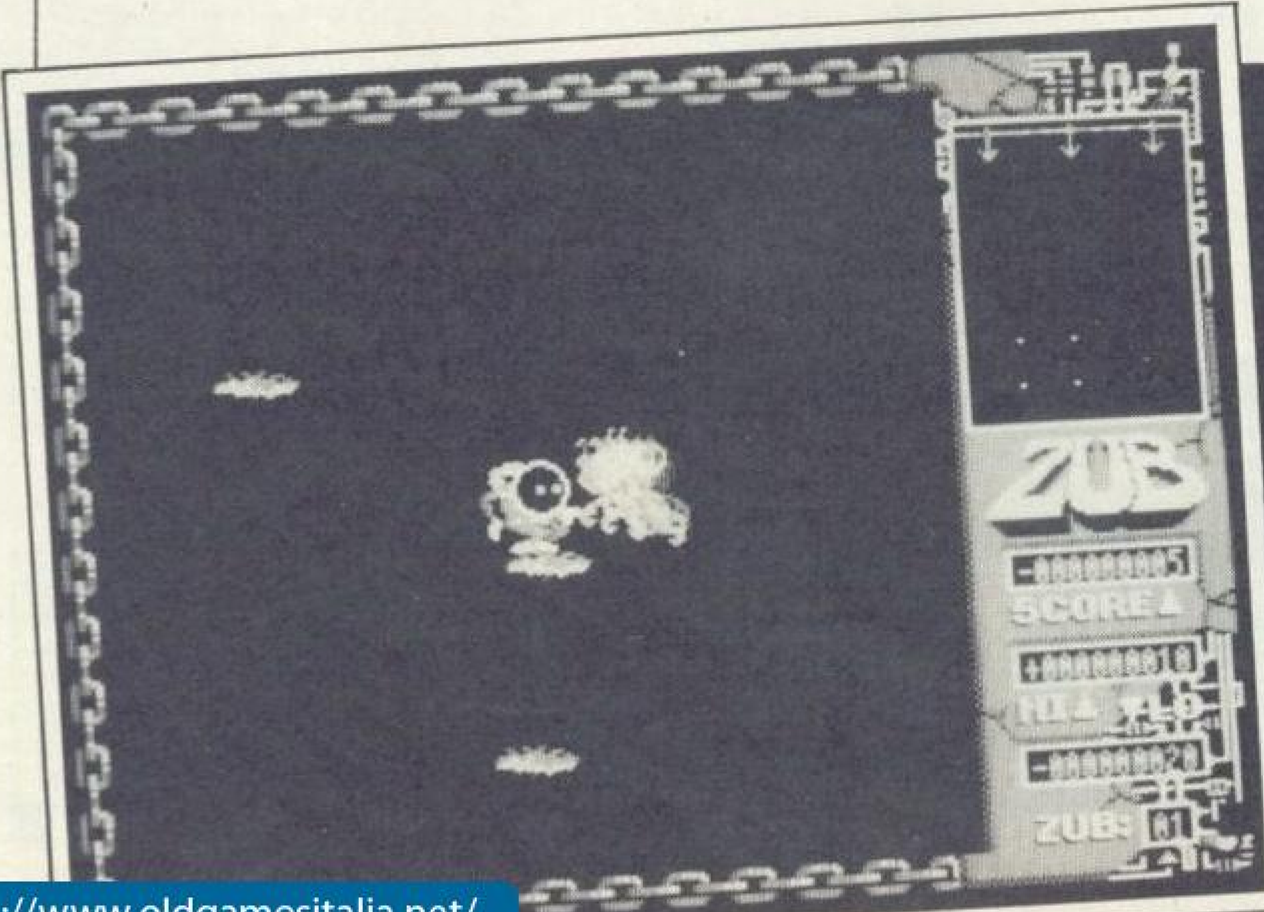
The office door swung open and Sergeant Zub greeted him, 'Ah, Sergeant Zub, I'll see you now.' A little surprised Zub replied, 'Actually it's private third class Zub.' 'That's what I wanted to talk to you about . . . I received a message from General Zub, which in turn had been handed to him by our glorious emperor himself, King Zub. It reads, Right, you lot, stop playing those Zubbing games and cop this. I've got a real job for one of you. Some little Zubstard has pinched by Zubking crown jewels, the Green Eye Of Zub to be precise. I want it Back! PM Zub informs me that my brother King Zub of Zub 10 has it – make that stolen it. I want it back, now!! So, then Zub will you accept the mission?'

'Er, (flounder, flounder) I, I . . .' mumbled Zub. 'Good, off you go then . . .'

You take control of that hapless zubbling Zub. Your mission is to make your way to Planet Zub 10, steal the Green Eye Ball of Zub and return safely to Zub 1. In order to travel from planet to planet you will have to employ the antiquated teleport system that hasn't been used since the initially disastrous wars of the Zub. Unfortunately the stairway that leads to the teleport has been destroyed. The only way to reach the access points is to climb your way up on the rock fragments that float carelessly in the atmosphere. Once you have jumped up onto a pad it will walk according to your movements.

Having found another pad, a bit higher, Zub can leap higher until he finally reaches one of the three various destination points. On to the teleport screen as you witness Zub plodding through the universe and then onto another planet. All the atmospheres on the Zubs are inhabited by mutant droids who don't particulary want to share the air space with a third ranking sergeant. So, Zub, make your way to ten and locate the Green Eye of Zub. Where is it? I mean, you wouldn't have put it anywhere silly would you . . . ?

Zubbidy do da, Zubbidy day – My Oh my what a wonderful game. ZUB is the sort of game that, on first viewing, looks a pain to play – but not so, in fact quite the opposite. It is a game with plenty of appeal and lastability coupled with great graphics, sound and best of all, a very reasonable price. It can't fail. Need I say more?



Presentation 88%
Excellent introduction screen lots of instructions!

Graphics 82%
Essentially simplistic but very effective.

Sound 88%
Several tunes throughout.

Playability 89%
Easy to get to grips with but not so easy to solve.

Addictive Qualities 75%
Once completed you might play again.

Value for Money 90%
Deserves to be a hit at this price.

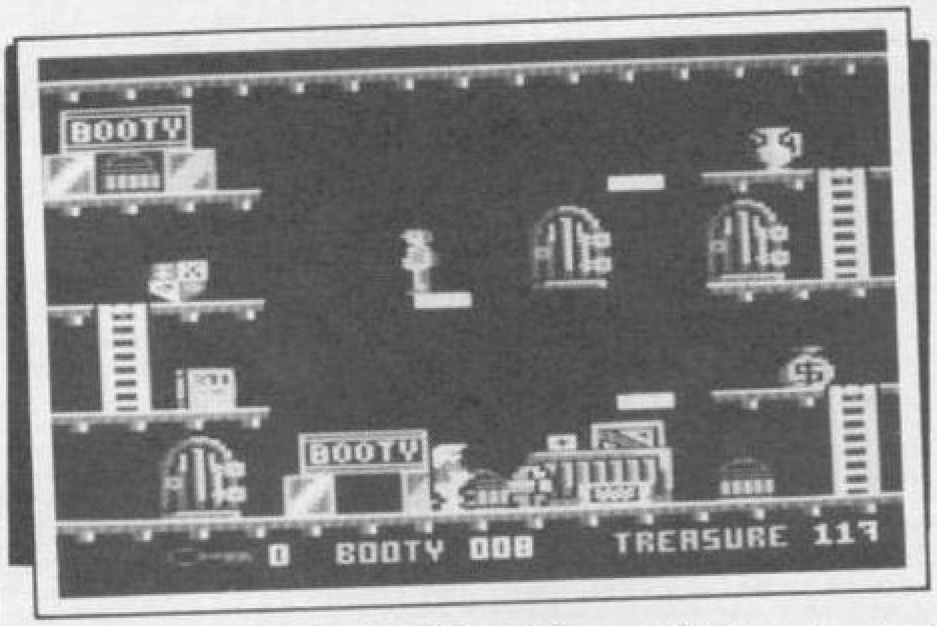
Overall 88%
One of the better budgets.

BOOTY

Firebird, £1.99 cass, joystick or keys

Hoist the main sail and scrub them there decks. Poor cabin boy, Jim, doesn't half get some stick from captain Blackish — Red Beard, a slave driving son of a gun if ever there were. But no more, Jim now realises that there are better things in life than being the ships dogs-body and has decided to take all the booty for himself.

Not a lot to say about BOOTY, a nice colourful budget game on Firebird's Silver label that should sell well. The only problem I could find is that the collision detection is a bit iffy at times, just when you think you've dodged the nasty you find yourself dead. Having said that this can be easy avoided by giving yourself plenty of time - all a case of experience. The screens with the moving platforms proved slightly tricky at first but like all the other screens, once mastered they can easily be done again.



You control Jim who must make his way around the Black Galleon's twenty holds collecting all the various items of treasures which are automatically picked up as he walks over them. Unfortunately some of the booty is locked behind doors whose keys must also be picked up by walking into them. Opening doors will lead to other keys. Be wary as some of the booty is booby trapped so that when you pick it up a bomb will appear and nifty foot work is needed to avoid the explosion. Once a screen has been cleared you can then move onto the next screen by placing Jim in front of a forward facing door and pressing the fire button.

A great Speccy game in it's time, some two years ago. I'm pleased to see that it still retains it's attraction. BOOTY is more of a logic puzzle than any sort of action game, especially when you need to work out how to get to certain keys which may appear elusive. Once you've got the routes mapped it shouldn't be too difficult to get further into the game without going kaboom too many times — which seems to be happening to me quite a bit . . .

When you have collected all the booty from the Galleon's holds, you are given 45 seconds to locate the Bronze key to the next pile of booty. Clearing all the booty a second and third time causes a search for the Silver and Gold keys, each increasing the games speed and hazards.

As well as the booby traps, Jim must face other deadly dangers such as the one of the captain's parrots or a ship's rat. Encounters with either of these will result in the loss of one of your three lives. Ghost pirates wander around the various screens and collision with these will have much the same effect. Some screens have trap doors and moving platforms, one slip and poor Jim comes to an untimely death. There, there Jim lad — a cabin boy's life is never dull.

Presentation 70%
Nice options screen, uncomplicated controls.

Graphics 65%
Become slow and distorted at times.

Sound 45%
Nice tune all the way through, minimal FX.

Playability 69%
Good timing needed in places to avoid the nasties.

Addictive Qualities 63%
It grows on you.

Value for money 70%
Well worth two quid.

Overall 66%
Good playability, good fun, a good game!

CYLU

Firebird, £1.99, keys only

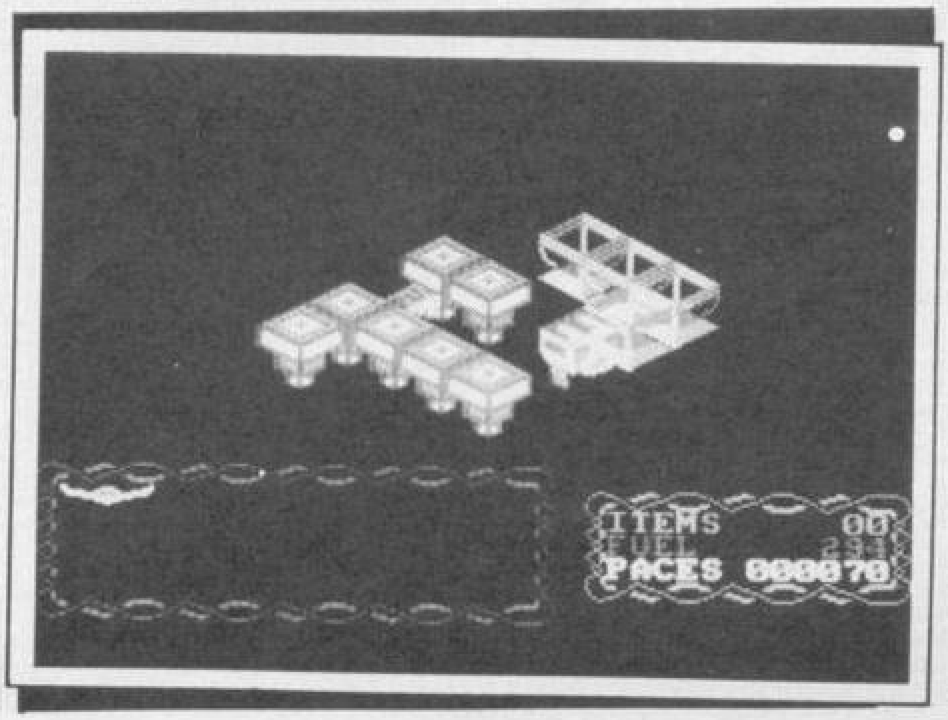
On the distant planet of Cylu a bitter struggle rages on between the various Cylurian factions on who is to become the planetary leader. But this is not a violent struggle, more of a war of wits with each prospective leader putting forward arguments to justify their claim to leadership. After months of debate it has become a stalemate and the Cylurian High Council, fearing a civil war or worse, have come to a decision. Each candidate must face the Maze — now it is your turn.

Your quest starts in a small crowded chamber deep within the large 3D maze. You must work you way through the screens collecting the 24 objects scattered throughout. These must be taken back to the starting chamber and deposited in the Master Computer. On your travels you will encounter 32 force fields barring you from further screens. These will be de-activated once you have placed the corresponding processors in the Master Computer. Corresponding keys can be found to nine teleport facilities giving access to the more isolated locations of the maze. Other keys can also be found allowing you to use a master refuel system at the base unit and a master return to base unit. As you wander around your fuel reserves deplete rather rapidly so to help you 30 fuel canisters can be found, picked up and used.

Your Cylu craft can carry up to five objects at a time in the cargo bays — indicated on screen by the number of squares. Only one may be accessed at any time by pressing the appropriate key.

Try to finish the quest with as low an efficiency rating as possible.

CYLU has been knocking around for ages now, on this, that and nearly every other machine. Finally gracing the screen of the Amstrad. Worse luck. The initial impression is how messy the whole screen is, it must be one of the worst colour selections ever, and on a green screen, well — may God save us all. 3D games these days have to have something good going for them but this has little new to offer even the price.



Oh, looky here — a yucky 3D game. Not very constructive I know but there's little else to say. The controls keys are many, spread out and awkward to use. The graphics are colourful but an eyesore with the main character becoming indistinguishable from the scenery in places. No tune, FX are minimal — the only thing going for it is that it's cheap — is that good? (The words 'cheap and nasty' spring to mind.)

Presentation 40%
Plenty of text — that's it.

Graphics 51%
Too colourful, rather messy.

Sound 35%
No tune, poor FX.

Playability 42%
Awkward controls, generally naff.

Addictive Qualities 37%
Not one readily returned to.

Value for money 45%
Nice price — shame about the game.

Overall 41%
There are a lot better games around for the same price and cheaper.

ER*BERT'S CUBIC CAPERS

Microbyte, £2.99 cass, joystick or keys

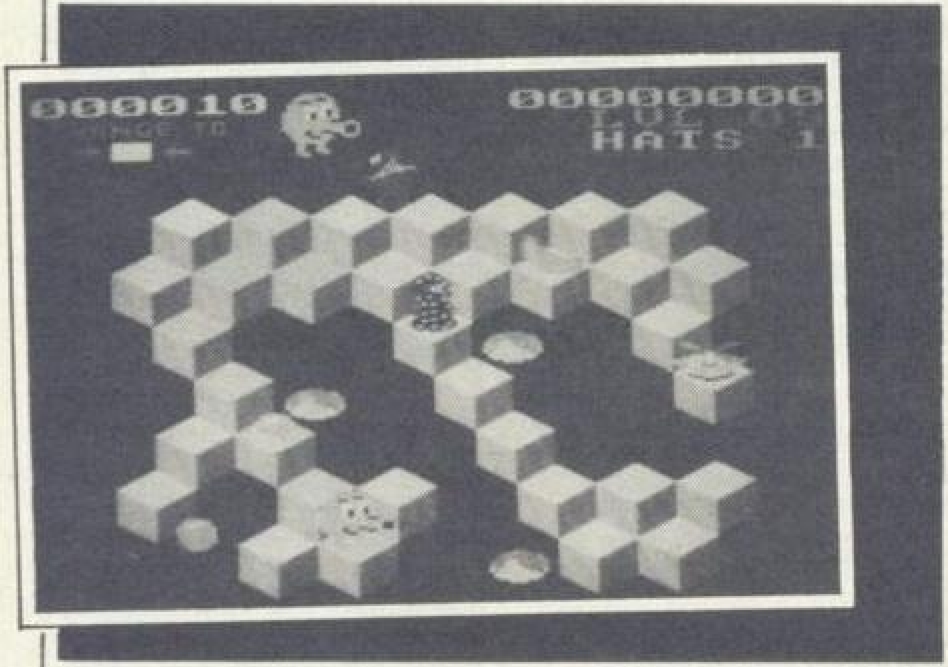
Bert's a real funny looking doobrie, a sort of purple ping pong ball with stumpy legs, a huge tubular snout, googly eyes and a happy smirk. Not that poor Bert has got anything to smile about, for you see he's somewhat obsessed. Strange as it may seem this little character has a fetish about hopping around the various screens and changing the colour of the blocks he lands on. All this serves to do is move onto the next screen — weird. If only life was so simple for Bert but, of course, it's not.

The blocks Bert hops around on are suspended over a void so if he leaps the wrong way he loses one of his three lives. As well as this obvious danger the screens are inhabited by three things; the Cascading Balls, Boris the Gorilla and Coily the Snake all of whose soul purpose in life is to chase Bert around and gobble him up. If that wasn't enough, at certain times various blocks turn into vaporising cubes and as their name suggest if Bert should by chance land on these he is instantly vaporised.

Not everything on the screens is nasty, though, for strewn across are Rota-Hats that Bert can pick up simply by landing on them and they can be used to lift him onto higher cubes. Situated just off the cubic platforms are a number of Transport Discs that Bert can jump onto, thus luring the nasties off the edge of the screen. After a while the discs will transport Bert back to the starting block — once used it will disappear. Landing on a Banana will double your points. Once a screen has been completed you are given the chance to gamble your score. If this option is chosen a screen, not unlike the gamble on a fruit machine, will appear. Lose, Even, Double and Jackpot Treble windows will flash alternately — pressing space bar stops the flashing and gives your result.

As well as the game, Microbyte have incorporated other options such as a 'create new screens' and 'modify existing screens' and various others.

The game itself is nothing spectacular with all you having to do is hop around avoiding nasties — this is not as simple as it sounds. Apart from that there's not a lot to do. Creating your own screens, or modifying the existing screens, goes some way to make up for the lack of variety but even this is limited. You must also remember the more complex your screen design the harder it will be for you to play it. If you don't expect too much then ER*BERT'S CUBIC CAPERS presents a very reasonable package for it's price.



Presentation 56%
Reasonable on screen instructions.

Graphics 42%
Traditional: in the style of the genre.

Sound 23%
Nothing remarkable.

Playability 38%
Okay, if a bit slow.

Addictive Qualities 35%
The construction set might give some lasting interest.

Value for money 40%
Fairly average budget game.

Overall 40%
Nice idea — pity about the product.

XCEL

Mastertronic, £1.99, joystick and keys

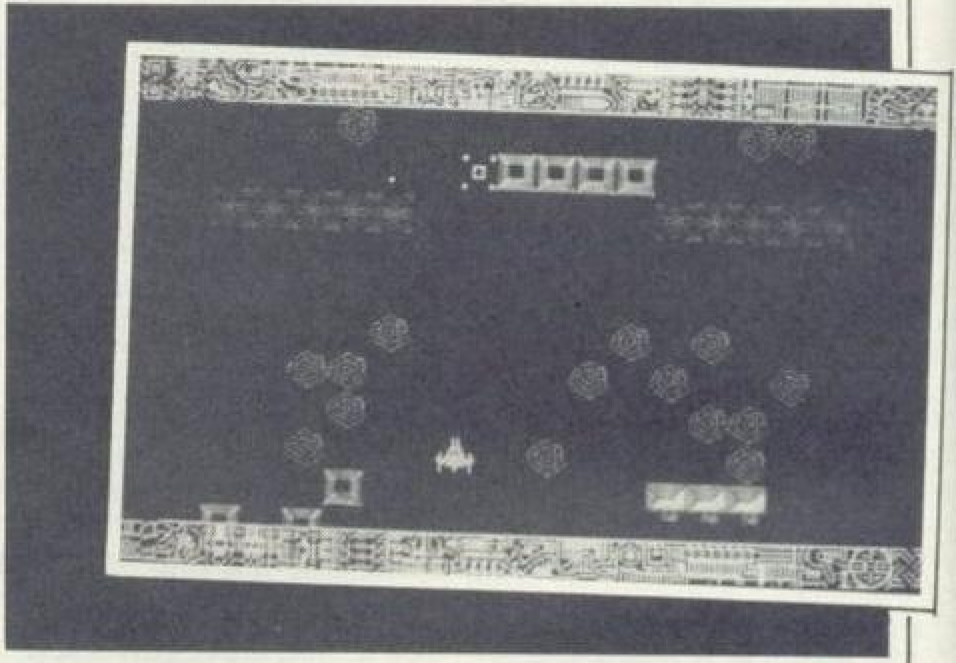
And it came to pass that all the knowledge that man had striven to gain was lost, as the generations went past, only some lonely memories remained as Earth slowly returned back to its chaotic, almost twentieth century values. Once the pride and joy of Mankind, the Sentinels – a system of thirty computer controlled planets that served and protected man, were said to have grown their own intelligence and a taste for power. Now the situations have reversed and mankind are forced to serve the computers they once created. You, are not of this way, realising the enormity of the Sentinels' power you steal an alien spaceship and set out to track down and destroy all thirty Sentinel planets.

The main screen of the game displays the current planet revolving below you, and around, is the ship's various control panels. The map option allows you to roam around any one of the three hundred playing areas in the game. Once the system has been chosen you then exit and go into the hyperspace screen.

At your disposal you have five shuttles which are launched for an attack on the designated planet's surface. Once on the planet all objects can be shot except for the 'trees'– the object being simply to get through. Contact with anything on the surface will destroy the shuttle. Fleets of aliens will swarm down upon you, these must be destroyed or avoided if possible. If there is a Sentinel base on the planet you will see it explode once the defences have been fought through. Then it's onto the next planet.

Simple shoot 'em ups are becoming slightly tedious and I don't have much patience for them. Despite being very well presented with a nice title screen and the like this doesn't detract from the fact that the game isn't anything very special. Check it out if you fancy a good blast.

If you like shooting everything on screen XCEL certainly has a lot to offer. Plenty of planets to blast away and many an alien ship to zap. The game is far from easy though and rather perturbing at times – when I finally managed to complete one of the more taxing planets I found there was no base, but that's part of the fun isn't it? The most difficult of all, I found, was working through the mazes of trees of which some I found impossible to get through and finally gave up trying. The graphics suite their purpose well even if they are not over colourful at times and there is a very nice loading screen. There's no tune but the FX make up for that – more quantity than quality though.



Presentation 62%
Very nice loading screen.

Graphics 59%
Serve purpose well.

Sound 52%
No tune, plenty of FX.

Playability 67%
Shoot, zap, blast.

Addictive Qualities 61%
Perseverence is almost certainly required.

Value for money 65%
If you like shooting everything it's for you.

Overall 62%
Nothing special just a good blast.

Quite simply the most realistic sports simulation game of all time.

HARDBALL

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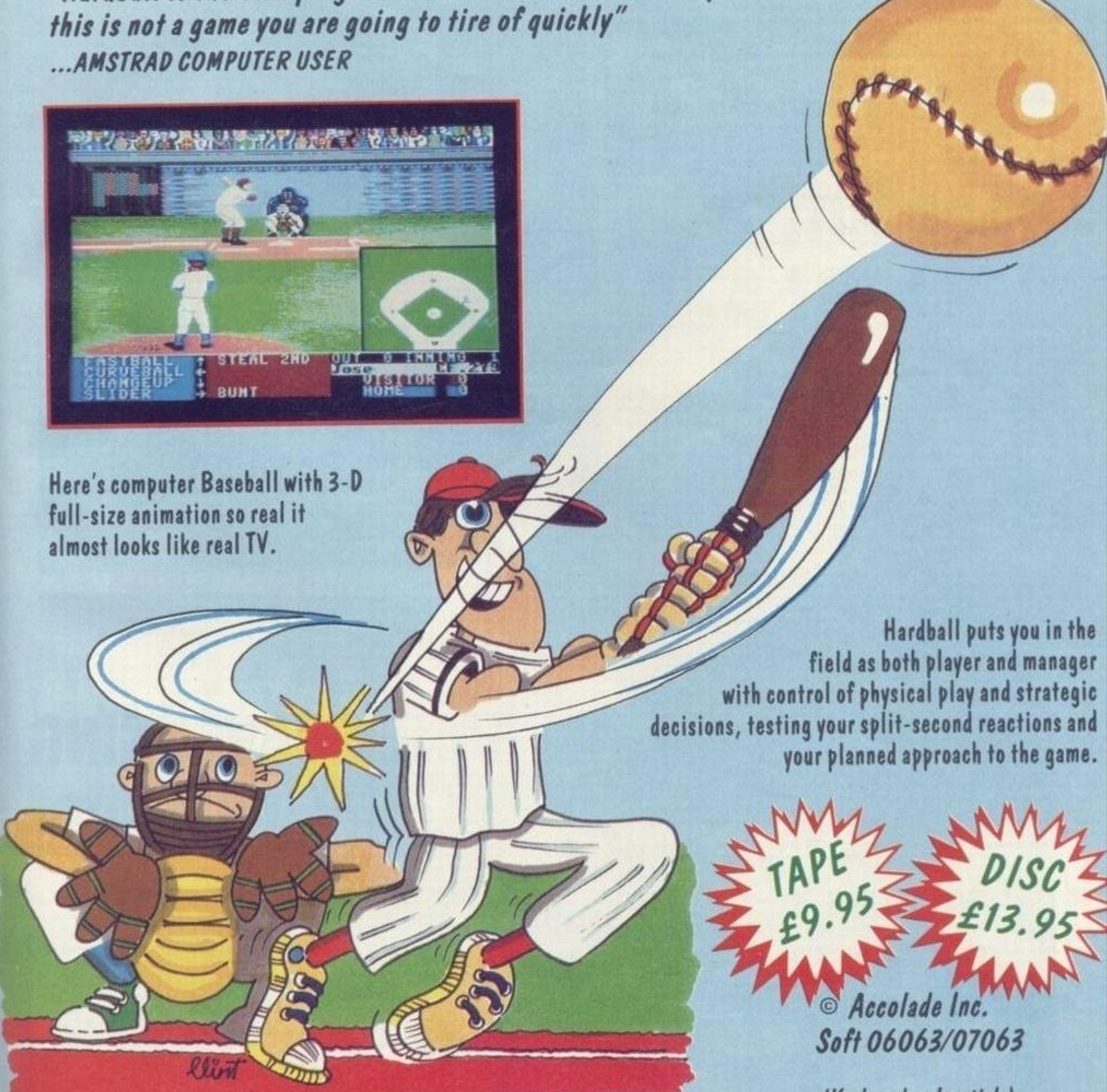
...AMSTRAD COMPUTER USER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FIGHTING THROUGH THE SOFTWARE

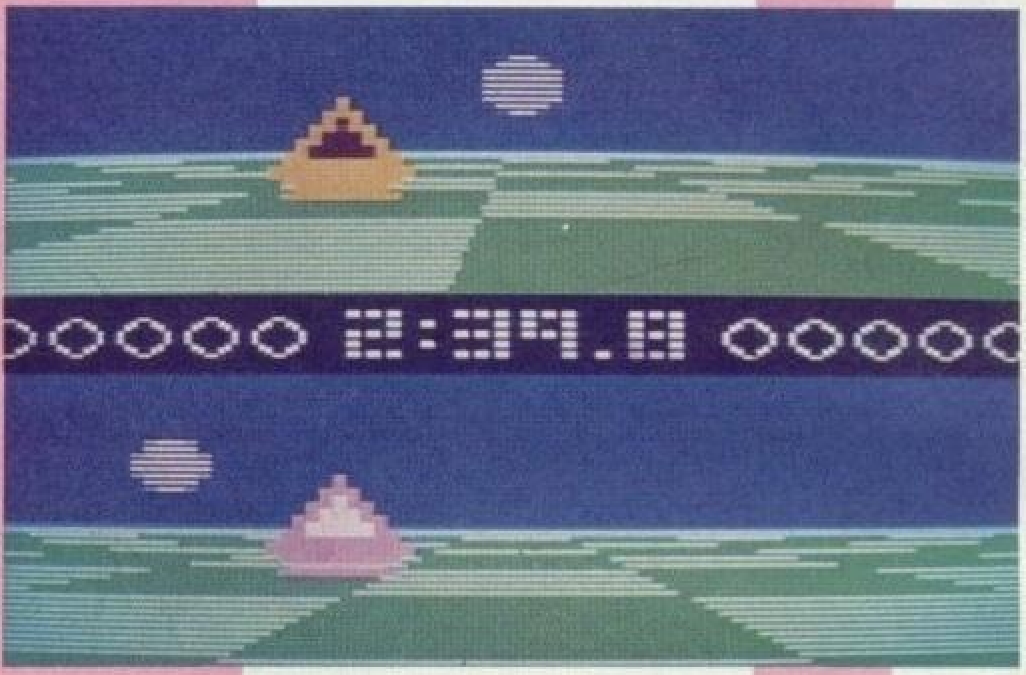
After being deluged with a record amount of software this month the rush doesn't show any signs of stopping. Some rather nice up 'n' coming games to tickle your appropriate fancies this month from some good old names in the games world like Melbourne House, CRL, Activision and Ariolasoft. Remember those lot? I was still in nappies when they were around. Well, maybe not. Anyway, cherubs, take a look at what's coming your way very soon and enjoy it. Cheers for now.

Rich

HAVE ROTOFOIL WILL BLAZE!

The latest release from Activision, **Ballblazer**, promises to be the most challenging spectator sport. Surprising as it may seem, the sport came from an inter-galactic war – originally intended as a military training exercise in preparation for deep space combat; players would have to learn how to handle a small craft with rapid changes of speed and direction. Hence came the simulation which developed into the future's most popular sport. **Ballblazer** is deceptively simple in it's conception and appearance – similar to a game of football with only two players. The idea is to capture a plasmord, a variant of a ball, and hit it through the goalbeams at either end of the pitch. The variables in the game are very flexible but wherever you go in the universe, there's only one regulation **Ballblazer** game – three minutes, two players (human or android), one victor.

Take the challenge to become victor in one of the most gruelling sports in the known universe. Grab a rotofoil, hop in and battle it out on a moving 3D perspective pitch. You've got everything to play for!



The two rotofoils face each other – each prepared to battle it out unto death. Play it, believe it, win it!

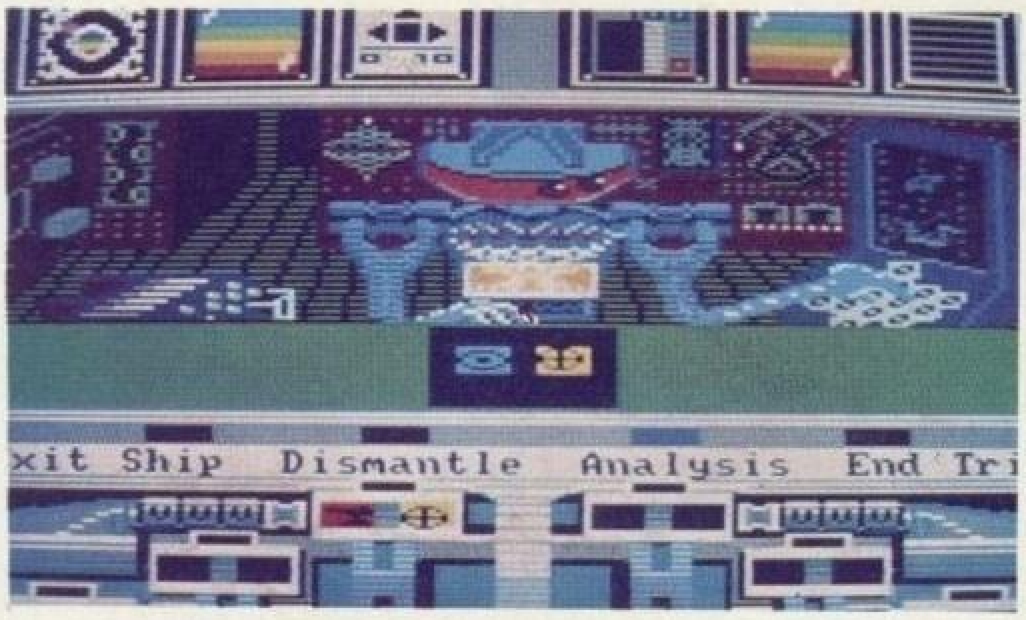
GONE SCAVENGING – be back later

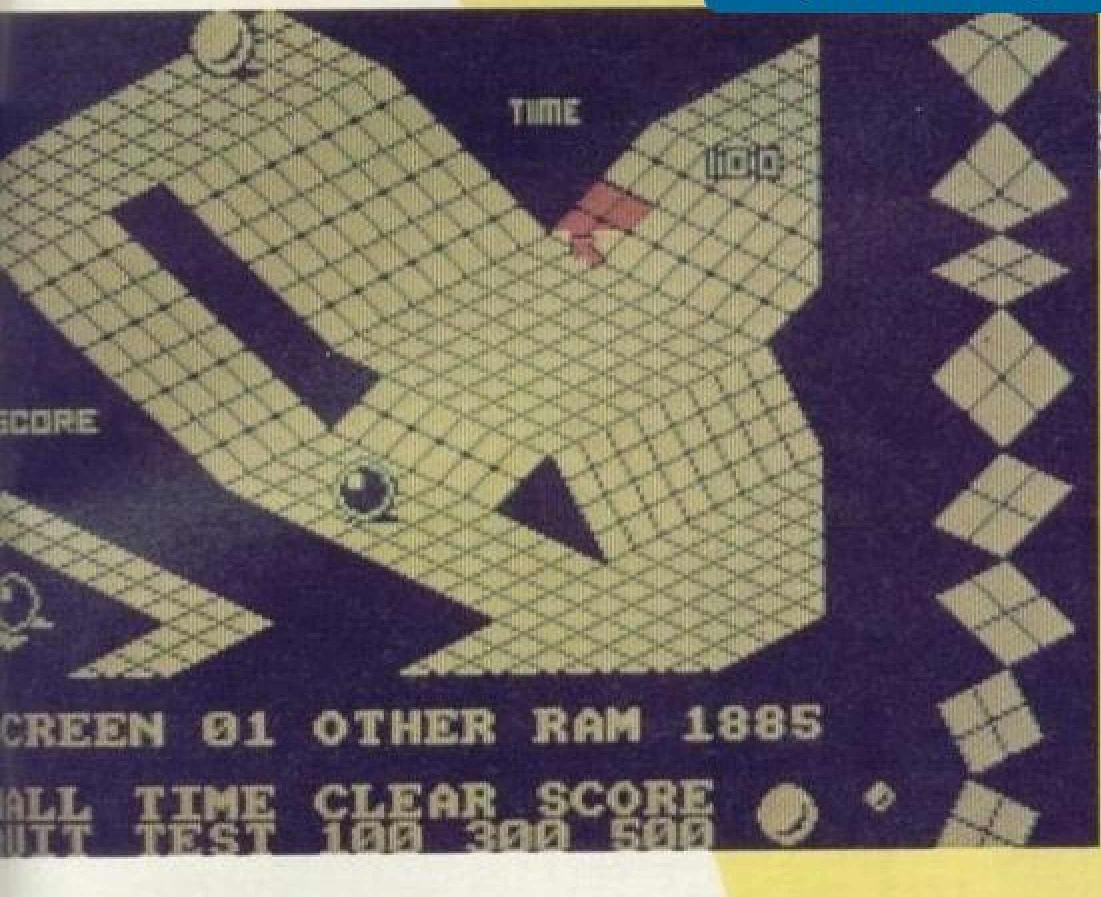
The action takes place on Koronis – a grey and barren planet, once the testing ground for some of the universe's most powerful military installations. You take control of a Technoscavenger who travels around the galactic empire scavenging on the burnt out hulks of ancient spaceships. Accompanying you is your android assistant, Psytek, she's located a wealth of things to scavenge – before you know it you're hurtling around on the legendary planet of Koronis. Visually the landscape appears similar to that in Fractalus, once there you must trundle around in your planetary rover. When you locate a hulk that is worth scavenging send your Repro-Tech droid out to examine it – venturing out yourself would be fatal and anyway it's much nicer in the comfort of your own rover.

With sufficient cargo loaded you can return and quiz Psytek to see how much, in value, you have scavenged. Koronis is split into twenty rifts, each with substantial hulks for the scavenging – but will you be able to reach rift twenty? Find out in the full review of Activision's **Koronis Rift** hopefully next munf . . .

What a great way to earn a living! Tramping around the universe scraping a living by scavenging the remains of various dead planets. Eating when you want, sleeping rough, nights under the stars with only the odd alien fighter to keep you company. Alien fighter? Oh dear . . .

Your gorgeous onboard Android, Psytek, makes a clean job of checking the the stores. Doing well me thinks!





Meanwhile down at the building site . . .

Balls. Everyone has them. Vortex, The Edge, CRL and now MELBOURNE HOUSE presents the classic ball game that has recently been a massive hit in the arcades – **Marble Madness**. Unfortunately there's only around 12 screens of arcade action, but never fear the clever ozzies have come up with a bit more. The whole package is entitled – **Marble Madness ,the construction set**. This allows the player to design screens to his own personal taste. They can be made as difficult or as simple as you like in order to perplex your mates. If you don't already know the idea behind the game it is to spice up the life of poor old Mr Spherical. The poor chap isn't feeling too good about life. Well, would you if you were perfectly round? Anyway, he's decided to enter himself in the local marathon across the slippery planes of abandon. If he can reach the end of each section before the time limit runs out then he can proceed onto the next. Hazards include ball-eating slinkeys, pools of oil, hammers that come through the floor and holes. Lots of holes and if Mr Spherical doesn't avoid them he'll fall all the way down into the swamps below.

Marble Madness will be out soon and costs £9.95. Silly price.

Life can't be much fun as a ball. No arms, no legs, no mouth, and no, er, naughty bits. So the only excitement is to enter the local races. Swerve the nasties, avoid the oil and if you get bored – build your own. It's so, so, so flexible.

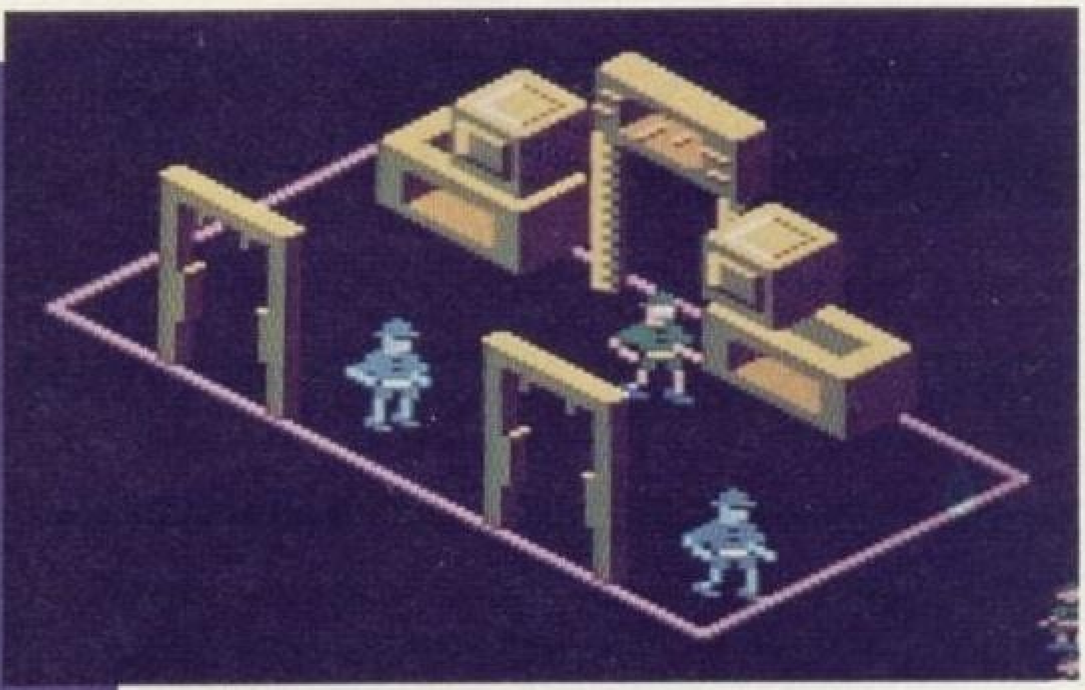
Watchit!

MIMBIES AHEAD!

The diminutive Ms Mandy Barry, well known to you as "she of the two front runners", popped into the Towers while she was doing her shopping the other day and brought with her an early version of Ariolasoft's latest game, **Zigguarat**.

It is a flick screen 3D arcade adventure that takes you into the haunted **Ziggurat**. The mad Tehotec who ruled centuries ago in Djo Carz, took the secret of the lost treasure with him when he died, and deep within the **Ziggurat** he lies along with his secret. Terrible legends tell of the horrors locked within the temple – Mimbies, a cross between a zombi and a mummy, roam the building. They are his protector and if you come into close contact with them you'll become one too. (Pause for screams).

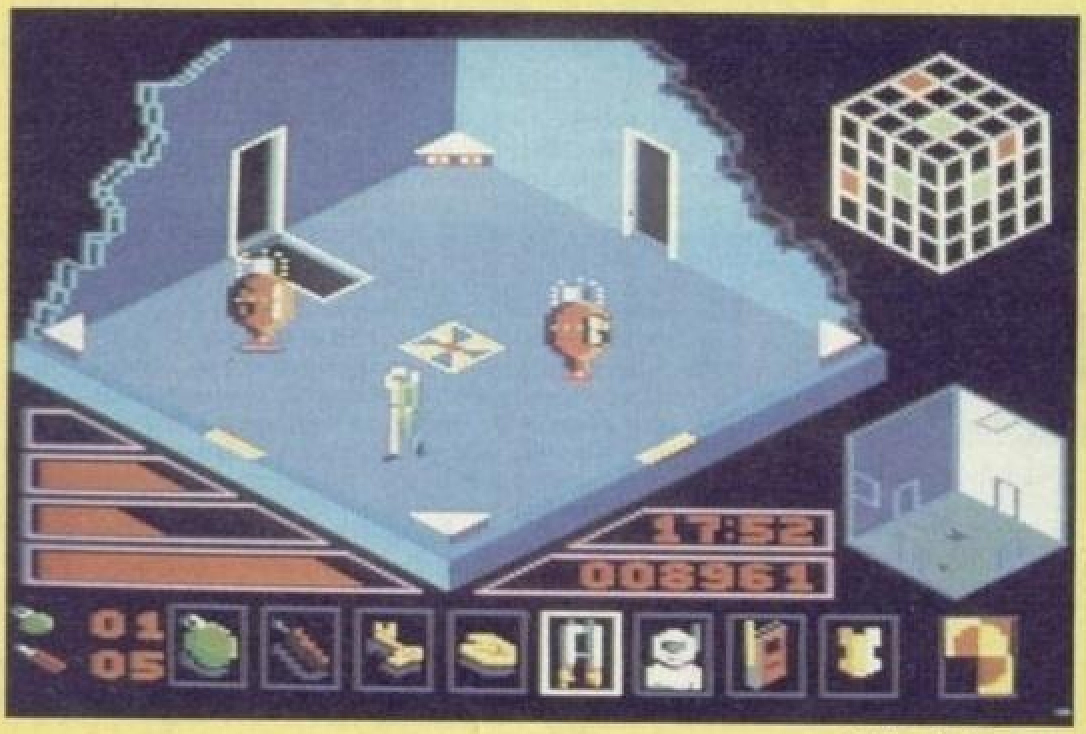
This game includes Ariolasoft's Swivo vision which allows the various rooms to be viewed from two different angles – very helpful if you can't see how to get around the Mimbies! Ms Barry was also babbling about superb animation, multi channel music, counter level lifts and plenty of scrolling backdrops. The game might just might be in the shops by the time you read this if not, then in the very near future.



The Yellow room – designer or what? See them Mimbies, see that trap, see them bombs? – run like f. . . .

Ziggurat: Designed by Tigeress, programmed by Chris Sawyer it promises to be on sale on the 12th of January at £8.95. Looks like Ms Barry has some more front runners up her sleve (jumper?) for '87 – more news next munf!

Unravelling the mystery of the cube



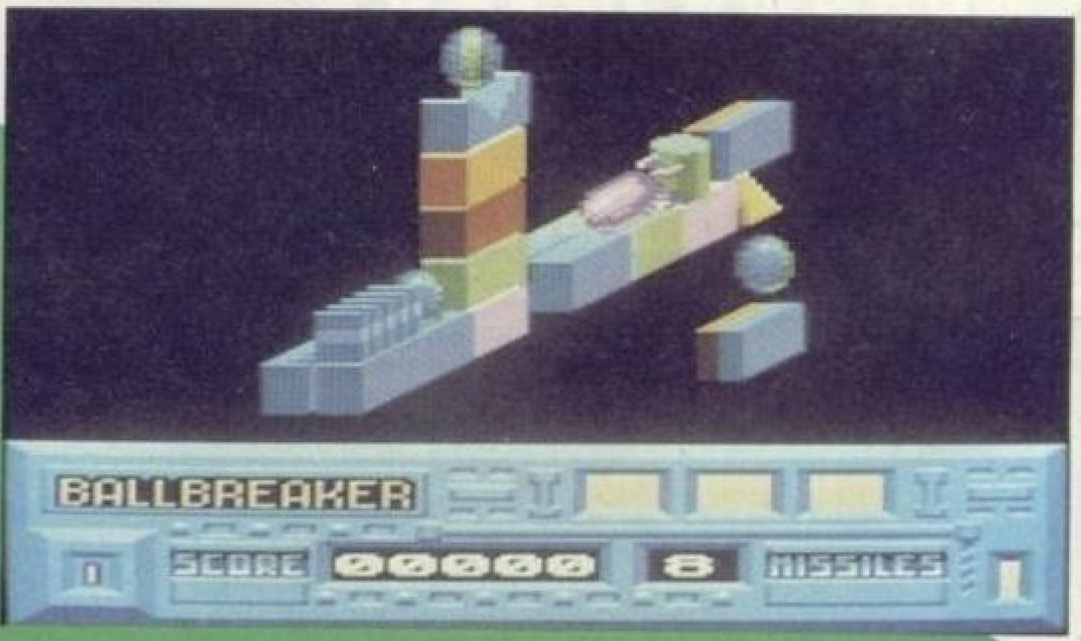
Whilst reading Ariolasoft's Mandy Barry's New Year's Resolution list there's a very interesting one: My company **will** produce lots and lots of lovely 3D games. Humm. Alright here we go. This one's called **Triaxos** and takes place deep in the darkest part of the universe, in a cube shaped prison known as Zed. There awaits a single prisioner – captured by the mighty Triad forces. He alone knows how to activate the Triad's devastating new weapon. This weapon can break through the Homeland's protection barrier and thus destroy all planets within its system.

The objective, as a player, is to battle your way through the extraordinary 'cube' prison and rescue the prisoner. He must be brought to an airlock in time for your spacecraft to pick you and the prisoner and destroy the prison forever. However, if you are not at the airlock in time then the prison will be destroyed whether you are ready or not. Take the challenge.

Another design from Tigeress and programmed by Pennsoft, Triaxos is in the shops this month on cassette for £8.95 and £14.95 disk and this time is on Ariolasoft's Reackor Lable.

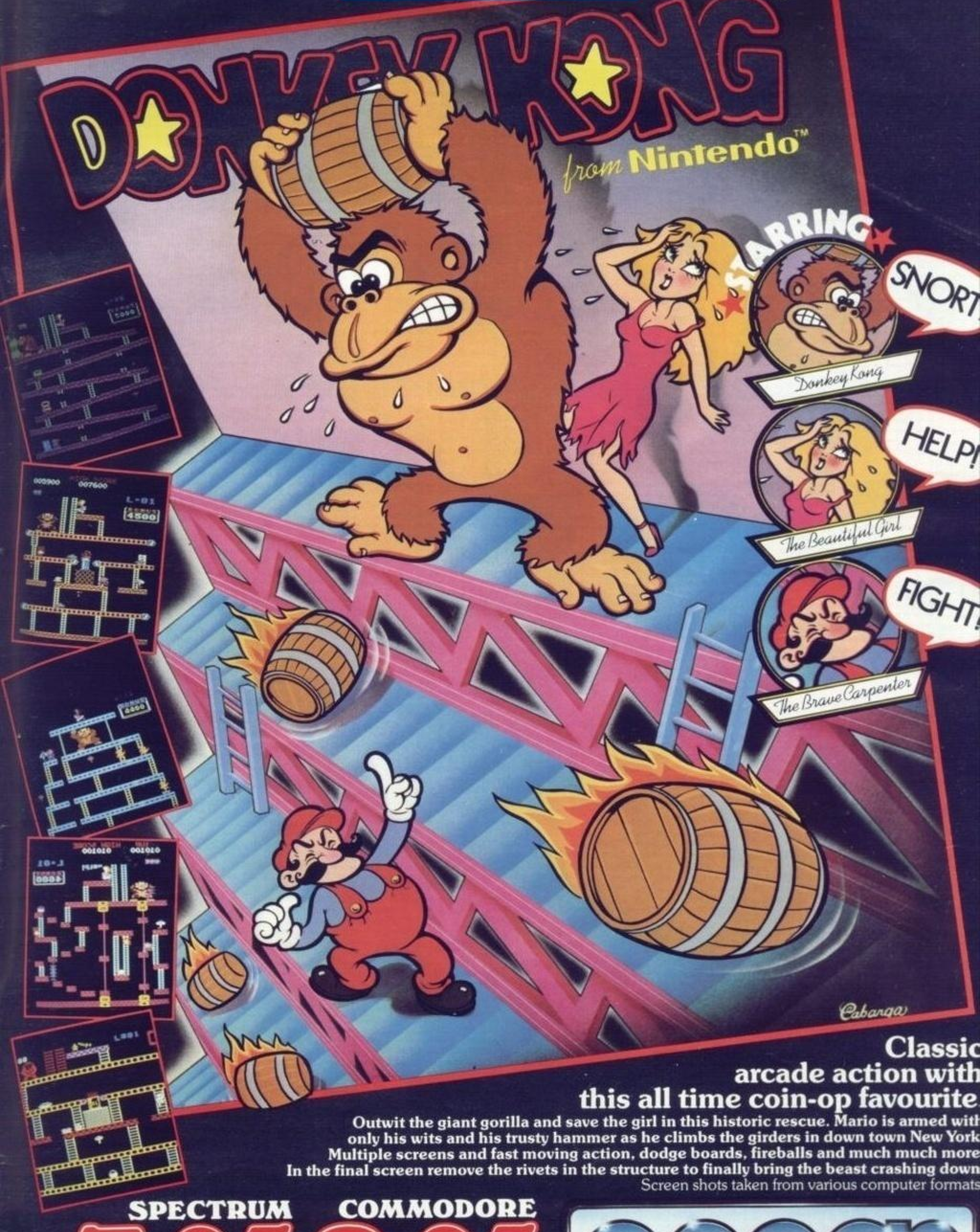
Boing, bounce, sproing, blam, crassssh! Controlling Ovoid the anarchtic ball break the wall, crush the system, beat the oppressors and win, win, win!

THE SEQUEL TO BREAKOUT



Do you remember Pong? Hardly forget it? And Breakout which was one of the first computer games ever. Well, me old crocs who remember that, it's back in glorious 3D-o-vision – in the shape of **Ballbreaker** from CRL. Seesh.

The action takes place in the **Ballbreaker** arena – a place where the sphere is at its most powerful. The object is simply to break down the wall and win. Originality at its peak here folks! Anyway, there's not much more to tell you about at the present time. To get the in depth analysis read the full review in a few weeks. Can you wait that long?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Classic arcade action with this all time coin-op favourite

Outwit the giant gorilla and save the girl in this historic rescue. Mario is armed with only his wits and his trusty hammer as he climbs the girders in down town New York Multiple screens and fast moving action, dodge boards, fireballs and much much more In the final screen remove the rivets in the structure to finally bring the beast crashing down

Screen shots taken from various computer formats

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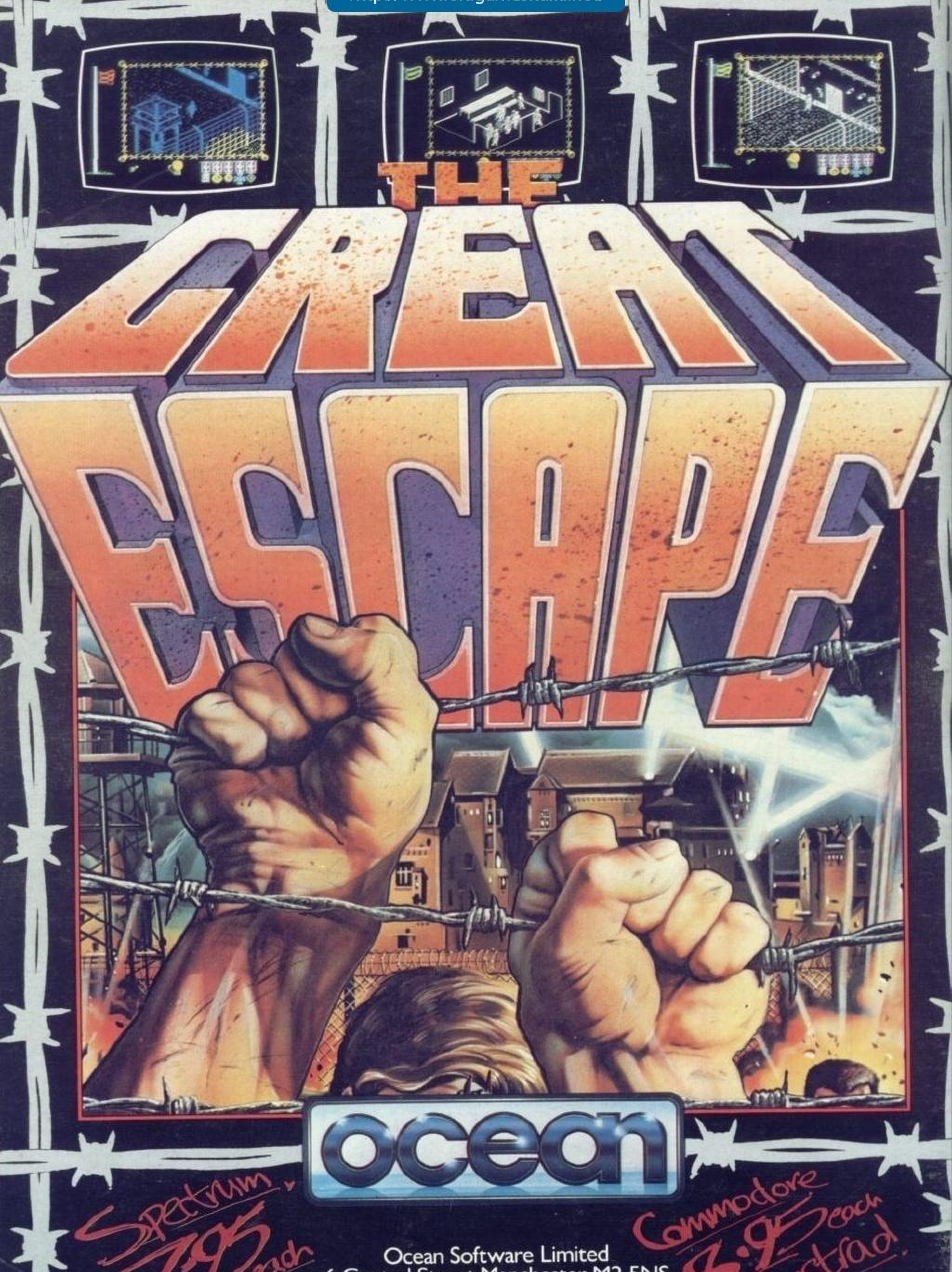
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